Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB GOGLEDD CYMRU

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE PANEL** will be held
MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2026 at **14:00hrs**.
virtually **via Zoom**

Yours faithfully,
Gareth Owens
Clerk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**

2. **Declaration of Interests**

3. **Notice of Urgent Matters**
   Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 June 2026**

5. **Wildfire and Activity report, for assurance**

6. **Governance Letter from Cabinet Minister, for information**

7. **Confirmation of response regarding proposal for payment to Members from 2027/28– draft supplementary renumeration report, for notification**

8. **Appointment Process for the post of Chief Fire Officer, for information**

9. **Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26, for recommendation**

10. **Annual Governance Statement 2025/26, for recommendation**

11. **Performance Monitoring Report Q1 2026/27, for recommendation**

12. **Final Statement of Accounts 2025/26, for approval**

13. **Urgent Matters**
    To consider any items which the Chair has decided are urgent (pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972) and of which substance has been declared under item 3 above.

PART II

It is recommended pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 12 to 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</u>
<u>EXECUTIVE PANEL</u>

Minutes of the **Executive Panel** of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Monday 15 June 2026, virtually via Zoom. Meeting commenced at 14.00hrs.

Councillor	Representing
Dylan Rees (Chair)	Anglesey County Council
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)	Denbighshire County Council
Rondo Roberts	Wrexham County Council
Chris Hughes	Conwy County Borough Council
John Ifan Jones	Anglesey County Council
Gareth Williams (from14:32)	Gwynedd County Council
Antony Wren	Flintshire County Council
Alan Hughes	Denbighshire County Council
Paul Rogers	Wrexham County Council

<u>Also present:</u>

Dawn Docx	Chief Fire Officer
Helen MacArthur	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Anthony Jones	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Justin Evans	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Mike Plant	Head of Planning Performance and Transformation
Lee Bourne	Head of Training and Development
Dafydd Edwards	Advisor
Gareth Owens	Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Steve Morris	Head of ICT
Heledd Davies	Atebol - Translator
Ffion Evans	Executive Assistant – minute taker

1.0 APOLOGIES

Councillor	Representing
Carol Beard	Conwy County Borough Council
Paul Cunningham	Flintshire County Council
Charlie McCoubrey	Conwy County Borough Council

ABSENT

Councillor	Representing
Gareth A Roberts	Gwynedd County Council
Dale Selvester	Flintshire County Council

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3.0 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 There were no notices of urgent matters.

4.0 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2026

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2026 were submitted for approval. A proposal was made that they were a true and accurate record of proceedings. This was seconded and passed with all in favour.

4.2 **RESOLVED to:**

i) approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

5.0 RISKS AND MITIGATIONS AROUND HWB AWEN TRAINING CENTRE PROJECT

5.1 ACFO Justin Evans presented the risks and mitigations around the Hwb Awen Training Centre project to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the key risks associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project, the mitigations in place, and the actions underway to secure funding and maintain appropriate programme control.

5.2 A Member noted that the Hwb Awen Training Centre project was critical to future firefighter safety. The Member also highlighted concerns regarding the implications of funding, including its potential impact on firefighters, risk to facilities and the financial pressures already faced by Local Authorities.

5.3 ACFO Justin Evans provided Members with assurance that the strategic outline case and the outline business case had previously been presented to the Executive Panel, where options, risks, and legal compliance were fully considered and discussed.

5.4 ACFO Helen MacArthur provided further assurance to Members that funding work streams would be considered and overseen through the governance of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

5.5 A Member asked whether the anticipated pressures associated with establishing a training centre had been considered and requested details of expenditure to date. ACFO Justin Evans provided assurance that spending remained within the parameters agreed by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).
Details of expenditure to date was provided to Members after the meeting.

5.6 A Member asked whether Ambition North Wales had been approached to seek a strategic, regional perspective across the authorities. The Chief Fire Officer provided assurance that she and ACFO Anthony Jones had already met with Ambition North Wales, reviewed the funding criteria, and noted that securing private sector investment would be challenging for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service), work is being undertaken in collaboration with partner organisations to explore the potential for a joint funding bid.

5.7 **RESOLVED to:**

- **i) Note the current risks and mitigations associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project;**
- **ii) Note the proposed adjustment to the programme to allow additional time for funding and stakeholder engagement; and**
- **iii) Note that no funding commitment is sought at this stage, but that future proposals may be brought for Member consideration if external funding routes cannot be secured.**

6.0 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

6.1 ACFO Anthony Jones delivered the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 which provided Members with assurance that the Authority had effective governance, risk management and internal control arrangements in place, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, relating to the financial year 2025-26.

6.2 The Chair noted the draft Annual Governance Statement had been reviewed in the morning by the Audit Committee and asked whether there was anything further the Executive Panel should be made aware of. ACFO Anthony Jones provided Members with a summary of the topics discussed.

6.3 A Member asked, given the positive internal audit outcome and recognition that the Programme Management Office (PMO) requires strengthening, if there were any plans in place to address this. ACFO Anthony Jones informed Members that the Service had appointed a Project Support Officer, who had undertaken an audit of the Service's current position. In addition, a job evaluation was underway for a dedicated Project Management Officer role.

6.4 It was further asked whether preparations had been made for potential slippage in the timetable relating to the implementation of the new Governance Reform for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales. The Chief Fire Officer provided assurance that this related in the main to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and confirmed that these arrangements have not yet been implemented. The Chief reminded Members that concerns in relation to the Governance Reform could be submitted to the newly elected Welsh Government should Members wish.

6.5 The Chair noted that this lack of clarity was problematic and proposed that a letter be sent to the Welsh Government. This was seconded and passed by all.

6.6 **RESOLVED to:**

- **i) Note the content of the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26;**
- **ii) Approve that the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 be provided to Audit Wales in line with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; and**
- **iii) Authorise the Chair to write to the Welsh Government to request clarity over the implementation process for the Governance Reform.**

7.0 DRAFT ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2025/26

7.1 ACFO Helen MacArthur presented the draft Annual Statement of Accounts for 2025/26, including the revenue and capital outturn, balance sheet position, and key financial movements for the Authority. It was noted that the Authority had maintained a stable financial position despite ongoing financial pressures.

7.2 A Member asked whether the challenges relating to finances had been fully considered, including whether they were sufficient and able to support contributions towards the Training Centre. ACFO Helen MacArthur provided assurance that reserves were committed and managed within the general fund. Improvements in strategy and forecasting were also noted, and ACFO Helen MacArthur confirmed that they were satisfied with the current position.

7.3 The Chair commended the ACFO and the Finance Team for the work undertaken.

7.4 A Member asked about the resilience to potential shocks arising from fluctuating diesel and petrol costs and the impact on the Service's fleet. ACFO Helen MacArthur confirmed that these pressures had been effectively managed, with earmarked reserves in place to mitigate such risks.

7.5 **RESOLVED to:**

- **i) Note the unaudited revenue and capital outturn position;**
- **ii) Note the unaudited balance sheet position;**
- **iii) Note and endorse the movement to and from reserves; and**
- **iv) Endorse the response to Audit Wales in relation to matters of governance relevant to the Statement of Accounts.**

8.0 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 Mike Plant delivered the Strategic Risk Management report to Members. The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update in relation to the Risk Appetite Statement and an overview of the Authority's Strategic Risk Review.

8.2 It was noted that the report highlighted the risks associated with cyber security and the importance of proactively managing and mitigating these risks.

8.3 The Chief Fire Officer noted that the Service had invested significant time and effort in risk management, which was reflected in it being one of the two key questions considered at the end of every internal committee. This demonstrated the importance placed on risk management within the Service.

8.4 The Chair advised Members that he and the Deputy Chair met with relevant Officers in relation to the Strategic Risk Register every quarter, prior to the Executive Panel meetings

8.5 A Member raised concerns regarding cyber security and the need for greater assurance and detail on the actions being taken. ACFO Helen MacArthur provided assurance that this remained a key priority for the Service and highlighted the ongoing work of the ICT team.

8.6 It was agreed that an update on cyber security would be provided to Members ahead of the next Authority meeting in October.

8.7 **RESOLVED to:**

- **i) Note the Strategic Risk Register:**
- **ii) Review and approve the risk appetite in paras 13-20 below: and**
- **iii) Deliver a Cyber Security training session at the next October Authority meeting.**

9.0 ANNUAL EDI PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT 2025/26

9.1 The Chief Fire Officer presented the Annual EDI Performance Assessment report 2025/26. The purpose of the report was to provide an overview of the progress against the Service's five-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

9.2 It was noted that the report highlighted partnership work and actions taken in response to the Independent Culture Review, reinforcing the Service's commitment to creating a workplace where everyone can thrive.

9.3 It was noted that the gender pay gap was narrowing and compared well to the national average, supported by encouraging progress as staff are increasingly supported to pursue promotion opportunities within the organisation.

9.4 The Chair commended the work undertaken and highlighted it as an example of good practice.

9.5 A Member noted that achieving full gender pay parity may remain challenging. The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that progress was being made, with more women developing their careers within the Service and the importance of increasing female representation in senior roles was emphasised, to provide visible role models for colleagues.

9.6 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Recommend Authority approval for the publication of the annual EDI report 2025/26 on the Service's website.

10.0 URGENT MATTERS

10.1 There were no urgent matters to discuss.

Meeting concluded at 15:03hrs

Record of Decisions taken by the Executive Panel on Monday 15 June 2026

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision / Resolution
1	Attendance and Apologies	Councillors in attendance: Dylan Rees (Chair); Mark Young (Deputy Chair); Rondo Roberts; Chris Hughes; Jonh Ifan Jones; Gareth Williams; Anthony Wren; Alan Hughes; Paul Rogers Apologies: Councillors: Carol Beard; Paul Cunningham; Charlie McCoubrey Absent: Councillors: Gareth A Roberts; Dale Selvester Also present: CFO Dawn Docx; ACFO Helen MacArthur; ACFO Anthony Jones; ACFO Justin Evans; Dafydd Edwards, Advisor; Gareth Owens, Monitoring Clerk; Steve Morris, Head of ICT; Mike Plant, Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation; Lee Bourne, Head of Training and Development; Heledd Davies, Translator; Ffion Evans, Members Services
2	Declarations of Interest	None.
3	Notice of Urgent Matters	None.
4	Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 December 2025	i) approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.
5	Risks and Mitigations around Hwb Awen Training Centre Project	i) Note the current risks and mitigations associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project; ii) Note the proposed adjustment to the programme to allow additional time for funding and stakeholder engagement; and

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision / Resolution
		iii) Note that no funding commitment is sought at this stage, but that future proposals may be brought for Member consideration if external funding routes cannot be secured.
6	Draft Annual Governance Statement 2025/26	i) Note the content of the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26; ii) Approve that the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 be provided to Audit Wales in line with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; and iii) Authorise the Chair to write to the Welsh Government to request clarity over the implementation process for the Governance Reform.
7	Draft Statement of Accounts 2025/26	i) Note the unaudited revenue and capital outturn position; ii) Note the unaudited balance sheet position; iii) Note and endorse the movement to and from reserves; and iv) Endorse the response to Audit Wales in relation to matters of governance relevant to the Statement of Accounts.
8	Strategic Risk Management	i) Note the Strategic Risk Register; and ii) Review and approve the risk appetite in paras 13-20 below: iii) Deliver a Cyber Security training session at the next October Authority meeting.
9	Annual EDI Performance Assessment Report 2025/26	i) Recommend that the full fire and rescue authority approve the publication of the annual EDI report 2025/26 on the Service's website.
10	Urgent Matters	None.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 5**

Report to	**Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Chief Fire Officer, Dawn Docx**
Contact Officer	
Subject	**Wildfire Activity Report - Summer 2026**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To provide Members with assurance on the significant wildfire activity experienced across North Wales during summer 2026, the operational and multi-agency response, the effect on communities and resources, and the priorities for future preparedness and resilience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 From 12 July 2026, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service responded to multiple significant wildfires, including major incidents at Conwy Mountain near Capelulo and in the Rhinogydd mountains near Harlech. A major incident was declared because of simultaneous incidents and the potential effect on service delivery. The Conwy Mountain fire affected approximately 230 acres and required a sustained response for more than 48 hours, while the Rhinogydd fire affected approximately 2,000 acres and required a significant multi-agency response over almost two weeks.

3 Crews worked in remote and difficult terrain, using natural and constructed firebreaks, specialist wildfire resources and prolonged ground operations. At Conwy Mountain, 36 properties were evacuated as a precaution and residents later returned safely. At Rhinogydd, aerial support was secured through Natural Resources Wales when a suitable aircraft became available. The response was supported by partner agencies and mutual aid from Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services.

4 The incidents demonstrated the professionalism and resilience of firefighters, officers, control room staff, support teams, volunteers and partners, while also reinforcing the significance of prevention, training, specialist equipment, welfare, national resilience and aerial support arrangements.

5 Organisational learning and the full financial effect continue to be assessed through established governance and budget monitoring arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION

6 It is recommended that Members:

i. note the scale and impact of the summer 2026 wildfire activity;

ii. recognise the contribution of Service personnel, partner agencies, volunteers and local communities;

iii. and support continued work to capture learning, strengthen wildfire prevention and resilience, to reflect emerging operational and financial requirements in future planning.

BACKGROUND

7 The Service's risk landscape is changing. Prolonged periods of hot, dry and windy weather are increasing the likelihood that grass and vegetation fires will develop into complex incidents requiring sustained resources. The summer incidents occurred alongside normal emergency response activity and generated significant public, media and political interest.

8 A major incident at Conwy Mountain was declared on 12 July and stood down once resources could manage the remaining activity through normal arrangements. Firefighters remained in attendance to monitor conditions and manage hotspots. The Rhinogydd incident developed across remote mountainous terrain near Cwm Bychan Lake, where access by vehicle and on foot was severely limited and the fire threatened areas of forestry and protected habitat.

INFORMATION

9 The operational response required specialist wildfire tactics, narrow access vehicles, incident command support, relief crews and sustained attendance. At Conwy Mountain, crews used natural and additional firebreaks to contain a fire front initially reported at around 1,600 metres. The position improved sufficiently for evacuated residents to return home on 13 July, although smoke and smouldering continued and the site was actively monitored for flare-ups.

10 At Rhinogydd, firefighters worked closely with Natural Resources Wales to establish and strengthen firebreaks, dampen hotspots and protect surrounding forestry and environmentally sensitive land. The scale and inaccessibility of the site meant that ground operations continued for an extended period. Thirty-six Service crews were involved at Rhinogydd and 22 crews responded to Conwy Mountain over the course of the incidents.

11 Strategic and Tactical coordination arrangements supported joint decision-making and the allocation of specialist resources. Natural Resources Wales provided specialist personnel, land-management expertise and heavy machinery. Aerial support was requested through established arrangements and, after availability was affected by high national demand, a helicopter was deployed to assist work in hard-to-reach areas. Aerial assets supported, rather than replaced, the coordinated work of firefighters and partners on the ground.

12 Mutual aid from Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services helped maintain resilience. Public communications consistently asked people to avoid affected areas, follow road closures and smoke advice, and report visible fire. Residents affected by smoke were advised to remain indoors with windows and doors closed until conditions improved. Support from the Public and the patience of local communities enabled safe operations.

13 The Corporate Communications Team maintained regular incident updates and supported the provision of many media interviews and stakeholder briefings. Messages recognised the work of crews and partners, explained the operational value and limitations of aerial support, and avoided speculation about fire causation while investigations continued. The incidents attracted national attention and strengthened the case for a coordinated Wales-wide conversation on wildfire prevention, preparedness and response.

14 Prevention remains the most effective means of reducing harm. Public advice focused on avoiding open fires and disposable barbecues, disposing of smoking materials responsibly, taking litter and glass home, staying away from incident grounds and calling 999 promptly from a safe place.

15 The incidents provide a substantial evidence base for structured organisational and multi-agency learning. Priority areas include welfare and relief arrangements during prolonged deployments, access to specialist resources, aerial support assurance, incident command, fire control resilience, mutual aid, communications, equipment, training and prevention. The learning should inform operational guidance, exercises and future capability decisions.

16 The incidents also reinforce the strategic importance of realistic training and command excellence. Firefighters increasingly need to prepare for large-scale wildfires, flooding and emerging technology risks. Hwb Awen remains relevant to that future capability, although any progression continues to be subject to its separate business case, funding and governance arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The response supported resilient and cohesive communities by protecting life, homes, businesses, infrastructure, agriculture, wildlife and the natural environment. Prevention and partnership activity also support long-term community resilience and the sustainable development principle.
Budget	The incidents generated additional employee, overtime, retained duty, fuel, catering, welfare, vehicle, equipment, consumable and PPE costs. The full financial effect is still being quantified through budget monitoring, and officers are engaging with Welsh Government regarding potential support through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme. No additional funding decision is sought through this report.
Legal	The response was delivered through the Authority’s statutory emergency response and civil contingencies responsibilities. No separate legal decision is required by this report.
Staffing	The prolonged incidents placed significant operational and personal demands on firefighters, officers, fire control and support functions, including many on-call firefighters balancing Service duties with other work and family commitments. Welfare, recovery, competence and resilience requirements will be considered through the review process.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Public information was provided through official channels and should continue to be accessible and bilingual. Future prevention and preparedness work should consider the needs of people affected by smoke, evacuation, rural isolation, disability, health conditions, language and digital exclusion.
Risks	Wildfire remains a significant and evolving strategic risk. Key exposures include simultaneous incidents, prolonged resource commitment, difficult terrain, limited specialist aircraft availability, firefighter welfare, environmental loss, disruption to communities and financial pressure. Mitigation depends on prevention, trained people, appropriate equipment, robust command and control, mutual aid, resilient partnerships, evidence-led aerial support and systematic learning from significant incidents.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 6**

Report to	**Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer**
Contact Officer	
Subject	**Governance Letter from Cabinet Minister**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 This is a covering report to the letter received by the Chair of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (NWFRA) from the Cabinet Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning. This letter is being presented for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 Following the Welsh Government elections in May 2026 and the change of administration, the Chair of NWFRA contacted the new Minister with the responsibility for Fire and Rescue and asked for confirmation regarding the proposed changes to the governance arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

3 On the 3rd August 2026 the Chair received the attached letter.

4 In this letter the Cabinet Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, Sian Gwenllian AS/MS, confirms that "The new arrangements will therefore take effect following the local government elections in 2027".

RECOMMENDATION

5 It is recommended that Members:

i) **Note the contents of the letter and the confirmation of new arrangements to be implemented after the local government elections in 2027**

ii) **Commission the Clerk to the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to develop the new governance structures, constitutional arrangements and operating model to be presented to the current Fire Authority before it's dissolution in 2027.**

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Strong governance arrangements ensure that Fire and Rescue Services can provide sustainable services to meet the long term risks to the public.
Budget	As yet unknown
Legal	Arrangements are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services (National Framework and Variation of Combination Schemes) (Wales) Order 2026
Staffing	As yet unknown
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The current legal protections for Equalities, Human Rights and the Welsh Language in the constitution and governance arrangements must be protected in the new arrangements.
Risks	Arrangements are yet to be devised and tested to determine if they provide sufficient governance and scrutiny of Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

Siân Gwenllian AS/MS
Gweinidog Cabinet dros Lywodraeth Leol, Tai a Chynllunio
Cabinet Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref MA/SG/1691/26

Cllr Dylan Rees
Chair, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Ffordd Salesbury
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Denbighshire LL17 0JJ

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3 August 2026

Dear Cllr Rees,

My officials shared with you my Written Statement on 13 July regarding the continuation of the intervention in South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority until after the local government elections in 2027. I am now writing to set out what this means for fire and rescue governance across Wales as a whole and to confirm my commitment to achieving governance arrangements that are effective, sustainable and work for all three Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs).

The implementation date for the governance reforms and membership changes remains unchanged for North Wales FRA from that set out in the Fire and Rescue Services (National Framework and Variation of Combination Schemes) (Wales) Order 2026. The new arrangements will therefore take effect following the local government elections in 2027.

As you will be aware, the previous Government indicated that Mid and West Wales and North Wales FRAs would have an opportunity to learn from, and adapt to, the experience of implementing these changes in South Wales FRA first, before the reforms were introduced across Wales. Whilst the intervention in South Wales FRA will remain in place, work is already underway in South Wales to prepare for the future transition back to local control. That work includes the development of new governance structures, constitutional arrangements and the practical operation of the new authority model. The learning from that work will be valuable for both Mid and West Wales and North Wales FRAs, and colleagues in South Wales will share relevant information with you during 2026-27 to support your own plans and preparations.

Welsh Government Offices, Cathays Park,
Cardiff. CF10 3NQ
Swyddfeydd Llywodraeth Cymru, Parc Cathays,
Caerdydd. CF10 3NQ

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400
Gohebiaeth.Sian.Gwenllian@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Sian.Gwenllian@gov.wales

My officials have previously shared the training and development materials for FRA members, developed by the Welsh Local Government Association, together with our expectations regarding engagement with constituent authorities as part of the budget-setting process. Those materials may be used now, or in the future, to support preparation for the new arrangements. My officials will also engage with Chief Fire Officers on the practical considerations and timings associated with implementation, including the appointment of additional members.

Alongside these wider governance arrangements, there has also been a recent change to the leadership of the intervention in South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.
As you are aware, Carl Foulkes has decided to step down from his role as Commissioner. I have decided to appoint former Deputy Chief Constable and Chief Constable for Dyfed-Powys Police, Claire Parmenter, as the replacement Commissioner.

As we move forward, I am committed to ensuring that we continue to work together to support the successful delivery of these changes. I would like to thank you for your continued engagement and support as we work collectively to strengthen fire and rescue governance in Wales.

You may have seen the report published on 29 July by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) providing an update on progress in South Wales FRS. The original and follow up assessments were commissioned by the SWFRA Commissioners to provide a whole service baseline for monitoring improvement across South Wales FRS. While the findings relate specifically to South Wales FRS, they highlight a number of issues and learning points that may be relevant for consideration within your own service.

I am copying this letter to CFO Dawn Docx and writing in similar terms to Councillor John Davies.

Yours sincerely,

Siân Gwenllian AS/MS
Cabinet Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 7**

Report to	**Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Gareth Owens, Monitoring Officer**
Contact Officer	**Gareth Owens**
Subject	**Supplementary Remuneration Report**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with confirmation of the response to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (the Commission) in relation to the draft supplementary remuneration report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 The Commission has published a supplementary remuneration report (Link here) setting out the proposals for remuneration of the Fire and Rescue Authority members following the proposed changes to the governance arrangements with effect from May 2027.

3 The matter was discussed at the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 20th July 2026, and it was resolved that a response to the proposals would be submitted by the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with the Chair of the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer and the Section 151 Officer.

4 The response contained within this report was circulated to Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority on 21st August 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5 It is recommended that Members:

i) Note the response provided

Summary of Proposals

6 The Governance model for FRA's will change after May 2027 to consist of 1 cabinet member from each constituent authority plus 50% co-opted members i.e. 6 councillors and 3 co-opted members for North Wales.

7 The remuneration model therefore also needs to change to reflect the assumption of greater responsibility. There are wide variations in scale between and the complexity of the governance structures in the three Welsh FRA's so the DBCC is proposing a daily rate for members so that the level of remuneration can reflect the actual time spent on FRA duties.

8 In setting the rate the DBCC did look to other FRA's in the UK, but they are very different with England FRA's being based around county or regional areas whereas Scotland and Northern Ireland have just one authority each.

9 The WLGA has drafted role descriptions for the new FRA, which have some similarities to the Scottish model including responsibility for

a. strategic leadership and direction.
b. governance, assurance, and scrutiny.
c. financial stewardship.
d. equality, inclusion, and ethical standards.
e. public accountability and stakeholder engagement; and
f. commitment to training and development.

10 WG use a model for determining the size and complexity of public bodies and on that scale the new FRA's are Band 3. The proposed rates of pay are as follows:

	Daily rate	**Up to 4 hours rate**	**Hourly rate**
Chair	£348	£174	£43.50
Deputy or Committee Chair	£322	£161	£40.25
Board Member	£292	£146	£36.50

11 The Regulations also require an adequate and effective internal audit of the systems of internal control, the findings of which must be reported to Members of the Authority. The Authority is required to approve the Statement of Internal Control annually.

Submitted response

12 The principle of additional remuneration for cabinet members above that for their cabinet role seems appropriate because FRA duties are quite different to those of a cabinet member in the constituent councils.

13 Whilst the extra remuneration is deemed necessary see comments below around potential risks in how this might be perceived.

14 Equal remuneration between elected councillors and co-opted appointees is logical and welcomed.

15 Remunerating on a time spent basis necessitates a lot of paperwork, and it is actually quite difficult to provide meaningful challenge beyond basic checks such as "was there actually a meeting on the day claimed?"

16 Claimable expenses could result in differential payments to different FRA members based, for example, on differences in how long each member spends preparing for a meeting.

17 Peoples' (un)willingness to claim can also impact their levels of remuneration. Whilst there is any element of volition around the level of remuneration claimed it is a risk that members will be subject to pressure to not claim their entitlement. I know that you are cognisant of the sometimes-unreasonable levels of pressure that can be applied to members in this regard and the risk that this makes public service less attractive.

18 Conventions or parameters can be applied such as an assumption that the time spent preparing for a meeting is equal to the length of the meeting though this is a fairly crude model.

19 Historic experience of the daily rate methodology is that meetings can be artificially elongated to ensure that the higher rate is achieved.

20 Without any parameters such as an upper limit on the number of days claimable, daily rates also make financial planning/budget prediction difficult. For that reason, the FRA expresses a very strong preference for an annualised allowance rather than a day rate.

21 Cabinet roles in constituent councils are expected to be full time. Additional payment for duties raises a question about the extent to which those duties are actually full time and is there a risk that the FRA payments might be seen as being paid twice.

22 Whilst it is understandable one might use the WG model for calculating appropriate remuneration levels, the model/remuneration rates have not been updated for some years and the DBCC will be aware of the consternation caused by its current use amongst some co-opted members.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	The Governance of the Fire and Rescue Authority is pivotal to setting and achieving long term well-being objectives
Budget	The final model will be fully budgeted for
Legal	Ensures compliance with the updated governance arrangements for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales
Staffing	Supports the recruitment and retention of members of the Fire and Rescue Authority with the requisite skills and experience.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	No issues identified.
Risks	The clarity of remuneration arrangements ensures that payments are appropriate and in line with agreed principles

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 8**

Report to	**Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Gareth Owens, Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority**
Contact Officer	**Llinos Gutierrez-Jones, Head of Human Resources**
Subject	**Appointment Process for the post of Chief Fire Officer**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To advise Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) of the arrangements for the recruitment to the post of Chief Fire Officer (CFO).

RECOMMENDATION

2 It is recommended that Members:

i) **Note the process as outlined below; and**
ii) **Confirm the membership of the appointments committee.**

BACKGROUND

3 Having completed five years in the post and 32 years in the Fire and Rescue sector, the Chief Fire Officer has submitted her notice, setting out her intention to retire from the role on the 31 December 2026.

4 The intention is to commence the search for a successor as soon as possible, so the new Chief Fire Officer can be selected prior to the Local Government elections and new governance arrangements in 2027 and to provide a period of handover and smooth transition.

INFORMATION

5 In line with all appointments to the Principal Officer team, the role of Chief Fire Officer is a Members appointment. There will be the need to convene an appointments committee of six Members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, and the Officers of the Authority. They will receive information from the assessment process and interview all successful shortlisted candidates. The appointments committee will identify a preferred candidate and make a recommendation to the Authority.

6 The vacancy will be advertised on the National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) website in order to attract suitably qualified applicants. The post will be advertised with the expectation that the post holder will be required to operate at Gold Command level. Recognising that the role is both a Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officer position, applicants without a Gold Command qualification will be required to achieve Gold Command level within a stated timescale.

7 Similarly, it will be a requirement for the post holder to have either Level 3 Welsh language skills or be required to achieve that level within a determined timescale.

8 The appointment process will be based upon the assessment process used in 2021 to appoint to the CFO role. However, because now there are no Covid restrictions, it is envisaged that the assessment and final interviews will be conducted in person rather than virtually. It also provides the opportunity to include internal and external stakeholder panels as part of the selection process.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

9 The provisional timetable for the appointment process is as follows:

- Advertisement to be placed by 4 September 2026
- Closing date for applications 25 September 2026
- Shortlisting and invitation to attend initial assessment by 30 September 2026
- Officers' assessment TBC
- Appointments committee 16 October 2026
- Confirmation of appointment at the Authority meeting on 19 October 2026.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	No implications
Budget	The funding for this post is within the existing budget
Legal	A Members appointment as set out in the Constitution
Staffing	A replacement of an existing statutory post which is required to provide a continuous duty rota
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Open to all suitably qualified candidates. Level 3 Welsh Language skills to be held on appointment or acquired within 24 months
Risks	Lack of appointable applicants

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 9**

Report to	**North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer**
Contact Officer	**Jon Blyde, Corporate Planning and Performance Manager**
Subject	**Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To present to members of the Fire and Rescue Authority Executive Panel the Annual Performance Assessment for 2025/26,

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 Section 15 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Fire and Rescue Authority to make arrangements for the publication of the authority's assessment of its performance during a financial year by no later than 31st October in the financial year following that to which the information relates.

3 Schedule 1 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 makes provision requiring each public body to publish annual reports of the progress it has made in meeting its well-being objectives.

OBSERVATIONS FROM SERVICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

4 Minor Amendments to wording and formatting were requested throughout the document, which have been implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

5 It is recommended that Members:

i) **note the contents of the Annual Performance Assessment for the period 2025/26; and**

ii) **approve the Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26 for review and consideration by the Fire and Rescue Authority ahead of the publication on the website.**

BACKGROUND

6 The Annual Performance Assessment is a self-assessment of progress against the previous year's improvement (The Measure 2009) and Well-being objectives (Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015).

7 There is flexibility in how FRAs choose to report on their performance but for consistency in reporting and accountability it is recommended that all reports contain:

- Evidence of the processes that the FRA has gone through to discharge its general duty to improve as expressed in the previous year's improvement plan;

- A summary assessment of the FRA's view of its success in achieving its improvement objectives as set out in the previous year's improvement plan;

- A statement of performance as measured by all statutory PIs, whether or not these relate directly to improvement objectives;

- Details of other performance information and its use, including the results of peer review, any assessments made by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and other sources of qualitative information including benchmarking data;

- An assessment of performance by comparison with the FRA's performance in previous years and with other comparable bodies (including other FRAs) so far as this is reasonably practicable;

- Details of the ways in which the FRA has exercised its powers of collaboration during the reporting year including details of whether a collaborative activity has achieved its intended outcomes; and

- Any statements of activity that the FRA has issued as a result of any reports issued under Section 19 of the Measure by the Auditor General for Wales to that FRA in that reporting year.

INFORMATION

8 The design of this Annual Performance Assessment mirrors the ‘Our 5 Principles’ design, and is consistent with the design of the APA 2024-25

9 As it is the second year of the five-year plan, a reflection of progress over the life of the plan is included, as well as the annual update on progress.

10 The APA contains the All-Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The publication of the Annual Performance Assessment is a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Budget	No implications
Legal	The publication of the Annual Performance Assessment is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Staffing	No implications
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The Annual Performance Assessment will be published in English and Welsh.
Risks	No implications

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Annual Performance Assessment 2025-26

Published Autumn 2026

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

Version Control

Date Amendment Applied	Summary of Amendment/s	Page Number
August 2026	Service Leadership Team Feedback	-
October 2026	Document Published on Website	-

Contents

Welcome to the first annual review of our 5-year Community Risk Management Plan.

This Annual Performance Assessment provides an overview of the progress made by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority during 2025-26 in delivering its Community Risk Management Plan and supporting the well-being of the communities we serve.

Over the past year, we have continued to focus on keeping people safe, reducing risk, responding effectively to emergencies, supporting our workforce, and protecting the environment. This report highlights the achievements made across our five strategic principles and demonstrates how we are delivering against the priorities set out in our Community Risk Management Plan 2024–2029.

The year has seen continued investment in our people, equipment, technology and partnerships, alongside significant work to strengthen organisational culture, improve services, and prepare for future challenges. We have continued to work closely with our staff, representative bodies, local authorities, emergency services, voluntary organisations and other partners to support safer and more resilient communities across North Wales.

We remain committed to openness, accountability and continuous improvement. By publishing this assessment, we aim to provide a clear and transparent account of our performance, celebrate what has been achieved, and identify where further work is required. We hope that this report helps residents, staff, members and partners understand how the Authority is delivering value and making a positive difference to the communities of North Wales.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any suggestions for improving our reporting. Our contact details can be found on the final page of this report.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Chief Fire Officer
Dawn Docx

Fire Authority Chair
Dylan Rees

Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit

Legal Requirements For Reporting

The Authority considers public accountability and transparency to be of vital importance in all aspects of its relationships with local communities, partners, and organisations, and welcomes the opportunity to publish performance information.

Each year the Authority is required to publish an assessment of its performance in accordance with the legislation which can be found here.

About North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

There are 28 elected members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority. The Service, led by the Chief Fire Officer, is made up of many different departments which all contribute to the running of the fire service. More information about how the service operates can be found here.

About North Wales

Knowing about North Wales today helps the Authority plan to make positive changes for the future. Information about the area which the Service helps protects can be found here.

Resources and Activity

Below is a summary of activity levels during 2025-26.

Fire Stations	Front Line Fire Engines	999 Calls Handled	Fire Service Staff (as on 31 March 2025)
44	54	15,972	989 (headcount)
Emergency Incidents Attended	**Fires**	**False Alarms**	**Non-Fire Emergencies**
6,614	2,043	3,209	1,362

Incident data can be subject to minor change.

Staffing

At 31 March 2025	Full time equivalent strength	Headcount of individual staff
Wholetime Operational (WDS)	284.00	284
Retained Operational (RDS/on-call)	371.40	512
Corporate Services	156.33	160
Control	32.50	33
Totals	**844.23**	**989**

Please note the 989 headcount figure quoted above, equates to 895 people. This is due to individuals who are employed by the Service in more than one role or position. For example, a firefighter control operator could also work as an on-call firefighter.

Over half of the personnel employed by the Authority are categorised as on-call firefighters.

Managing Public Resources Responsibly

Throughout 2025-26, the Authority continued to manage public funds responsibly, directing resources to the areas of greatest risk and need. Investment decisions were supported by robust business cases, procurement processes and governance arrangements to ensure value for money. Despite ongoing financial pressures, the Service remained focused on maintaining frontline services while investing in improvements that benefit communities across North Wales.

Full details of the Authority's financial performance and position are available in the Audited Statement of Accounts.

What is Expected of the Fire Authority

Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales

Fire Prevention	Must arrange for fire safety to be promoted in their area. This would include informing people about fire prevention and advising them how best to react if a fire does break out.
Fire Safety Enforcement	Have a duty to enforce fire safety in non-domestic premises, for example, hotels, schools, shops and offices. This duty includes exercising powers to issue alteration, enforcement and even prohibition notices if they find that fire safety arrangements in premises are unsatisfactory.
Emergency Response	Must make arrangements for receiving 999 calls and for sending trained and equipped personnel to extinguish fires and protect life and property at those fires. They must also make arrangements for rescuing people from road traffic collisions and for protecting them from serious harm.
Planning for and Responding to Other Emergencies	Must make arrangements for the mass decontamination of people after chemical, biological or radio-active incidents, and for rescuing people from trains, aircrafts and collapsed buildings. They must also be prepared to assist with large-scale emergencies (including terrorist attacks) elsewhere in the UK. As 'Category 1' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act, fire and rescue authorities also have duties relating to large-scale events that threaten serious damage to the welfare of people, wildlife, the environment and primary supply chains.
Flooding and Inland Water Emergencies	Must make arrangements to respond to incidents of flooding or water rescue which pose a direct threat of death or injury.
Equalities	Must work towards eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with different protected characteristics.
Welsh Language	Treat the Welsh and English languages equally, promoting the use of Welsh and complying with defined Welsh language standards.
Continuous Improvement	Must set objectives continuously to improve what they do and publish information about their improvement and performance.
Future Planning	Must work towards improving people's social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being, as well as working in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the needs of future generations.

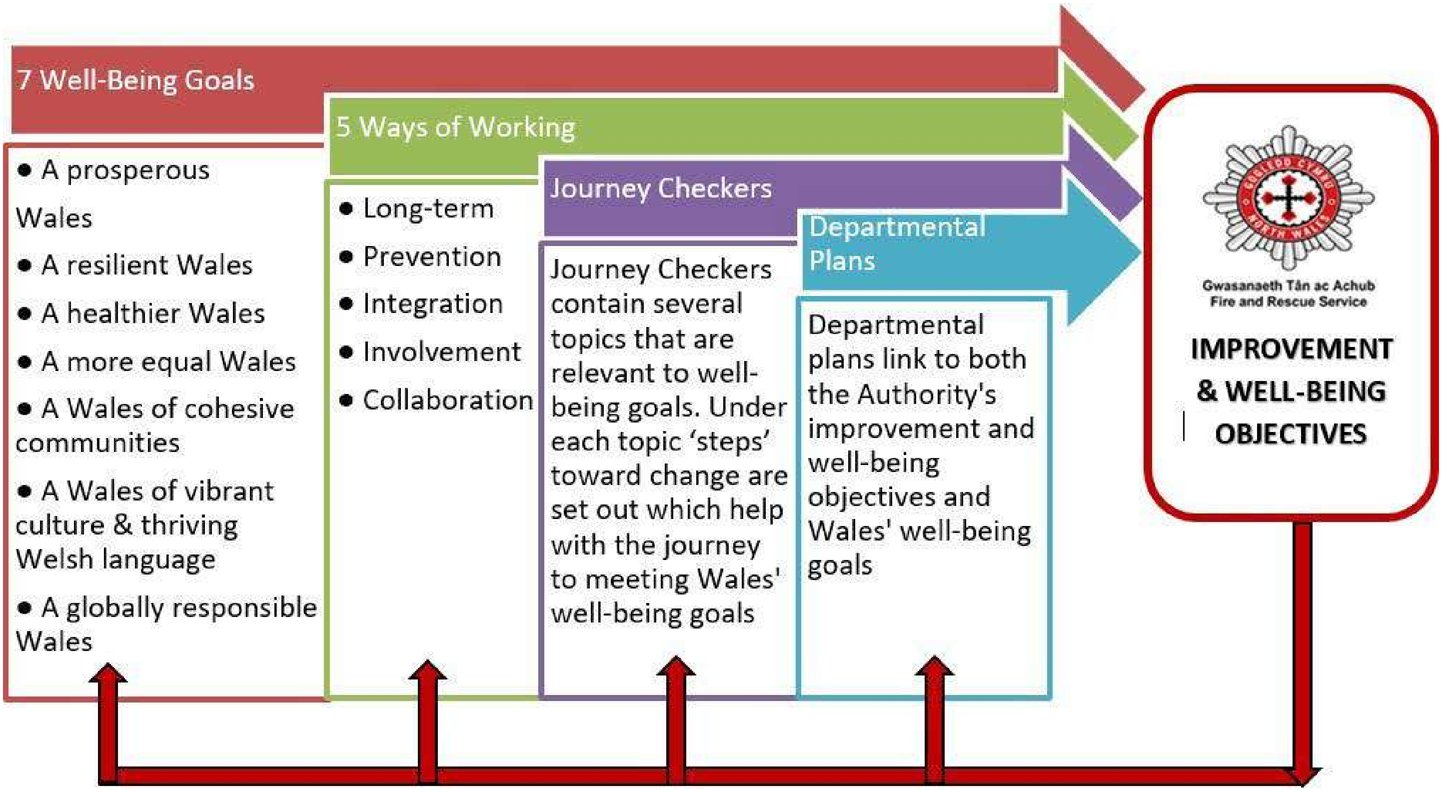
You can read more about our statutory obligations here.

Progress Against Improvement and Well-being Objectives

This section describes the progress the Authority made towards meeting its long- term improvement and well-being objectives during 2025-26. The Authority is required to publish this assessment of its own performance for 2025-26, and the statutory performance indicators for the same year, by 31 October 2026.

In April 2021 the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) approved the 'Community Risk Management Planning' (CRMP) as a Fire Standard for English Fire and Rescue Services. Although Fire and Rescue Services are devolved to Welsh Government, all Fire and Rescue Services within Wales have adopted the NFCC guidelines to publish a CRMP.

The Authority have incorporated the NFCC recommendations into its annual reporting cycle and, have updated its previous long-term plan with a new five-year Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29. The Authority's new Five Principles have replaced the existing seven long-term improvement and well-being objectives.



During 2025-26, work was undertaken to ensure the well-being objectives were embedded throughout all departmental plans where applicable.

The Annual Governance Statement for 2025-26 provides an overview of the governance arrangements as well as confirming a work plan for 2026-27.

Once approved and published, performance against the forward work plan will be monitored through the Service Leadership Team's Performance Board.

Our People Principle

Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.

Ensuring a highly skilled workforce by recruiting, developing and retaining a motivated and bilingual workforce that represents and champions the diversity of the communities we serve.

Well-being goals met:

A resilient Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A healthier Wales

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

A more equal Wales

A prosperous Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Ensure compliance with the Welsh language standards, including providing opportunities for learning Welsh and promotion of activities in line with our commitment to being a bilingual organisation.

As part of the Fire Authority's efforts to strengthen the use of the Welsh language, and preserve the heritage of local areas, our new internal Welsh language policy states that, where appropriate, station names in all internal communications will be referred to using their Welsh-language forms only.

Most of our stations already use the singular Welsh name for their location. However, the few that have dual names will be referred to by their Welsh name in internal communications.

English Name	Welsh Name	How to Pronounce
Buckley	Bwcle	Book – lare
Barmouth	Abermaw	Aber – maw (rhymes with 'now')
Colwyn Bay	Bae Colwyn	By – Colwyn
Chirk	Y Waun	Ugh – Wine
Deeside	Glannau Dyfrdwy	Glan – eye – dove - dwi
Denbigh	Dinbych	Din – bich (Welsh 'ch')
Flint	Fflint	No change

Holyhead	Caergybi	Kire – gybee
Holywell	Treffynnon	Trare – fur - non
Mold	Yr Wyddgrug	Ugh With - grig
Ruthin	Rhuthun	Rhith – in
St Asaph	Llanelwy	Llan – elwi
Wrexham	Wrecsam	No change

Place names help tell the story of who we are as a nation, and some places have even lost their original Welsh name officially in favour of the English name.

We have been inspired by institutions that have already put this in place such as the national park authority who have decided to use Eryri rather than Snowdonia, and Yr Wyddfa instead of Snowdon back in 2022 and also the Football Association of Wales who have been using Cymru instead of Wales, internally since 2021.

The Welsh Language continues to be promoted internally with the issue of newsletters, social media posts, and 'Paned a Sgwrs' events. Where staff are encouraged to use their Welsh Language skills, at whatever level, at an informal setting over a cup of tea.

The latest Welsh Language standards Annual Report can be found here.

Action 2: Support the delivery of an action plan for improvement following the 2023 Fire Family Staff Survey.

The categories for the annual Service Awards have been reviewed in response to staff feedback and as part of ongoing work to strengthen how staff are recognised across the organisation.

The award categories have also been aligned with the Service's four core values: Service to the Community, Striving for Excellence, People, and Diversity and Inclusivity.

The following highlights progress made in response to feedback from the 2023 staff survey:

- **Role indicators introduced:** Most respondents supported the introduction of operational role indicators, which were implemented in January 2025. The decision was made not to provide 'role markers' to other staff groups.
- **Recognising and celebrating staff:** A new Reward, Recognition and Innovation Policy has been introduced, alongside a regular feature in the Services' weekly staff update to celebrate staff achievements across the organisation. Work is also ongoing to explore new ways to strengthen staff engagement and collaboration.
- **Supporting managers:** Targeted development and training has been introduced in response to areas identified for improvement in the survey.
- **On-call engagement:** Staff engagement sessions have helped shape planned improvements, including more accessible survey options, local champions, and stronger support arrangements.

The service are now focussing on the outcomes from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Action 3: Plan for and deliver the 2025 Fire Family Staff Survey.

The third Fire Family Survey was open for staff feedback from 3 October 2025 until 14 November 2025. This gave all staff the opportunity to help shape the future of the Service. The Fire Family Working Group ensured that the survey was accessible, engaging, and meaningful. Discussions focused on finalising the survey questions, developing a clear communications plan and preparing launch materials that reflected the diversity and values of our fire family.

Following feedback gathered from the previous survey in 2023, members of the working group acted as 'Survey Champions', visiting stations and workplaces to raise awareness of the survey and provide practical support, such as helping staff access the link, understand the questions, and complete the survey if needed.

The results were presented highlighting key themes and outcomes, and the Fire Family Staff Survey Working Group will create an action plan based on these common trends.

Action 4: Communicate the findings of the CREST independent cultural review to staff and external stakeholders and work with staff to develop and implement how we respond, based upon the recommendations of the report, to further strengthen and improve our workplace culture.

As part of the Service's commitment to strengthening organisational culture, two Culture Champions were appointed to support the delivery of the Service's cultural improvement programme.

Working closely with senior leaders, representative bodies, staff networks and colleagues across the organisation, the Culture Champions have championed inclusive practices, strengthened engagement and trust, and supported the development of a workplace culture that is open, respectful and empowering. They have worked across the Service by attending key governance meetings, engaging with external organisations to identify good practice, and undertaking extensive engagement with staff across a variety of settings.

A key focus of the roles has been to improve communication and engagement, ensuring that colleagues are informed, listened to and regularly updated on progress against the Service's culture improvement programme. Feedback gathered through staff engagement has directly informed priorities and actions, helping to ensure that improvements reflect the experiences of our workforce.

In March 2024, the Welsh Government commissioned an independent cultural review of both North Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services in response to national and local concerns relating to workplace culture, values, behaviours and fairness. Following a competitive procurement process, Crest Advisory completed and published its independent review in February 2025.

In response to the findings, the Service has made significant progress in delivering its improvement programme. This includes:

- Finalising and publishing the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan.
- Establishing clear governance arrangements, implementation timescales and accountable leads for each recommendation.

- Strengthening leadership development with an increased focus on people management, values-based leadership and inclusive behaviours.
- Improving transparency, consistency and fairness across recruitment, promotion and complaints processes.
- Maintaining regular communication with staff, representative bodies and external stakeholders on progress and achievements.
- Developing an interactive Culture Improvement Dashboard, enabling all staff to monitor progress against improvement actions and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Continuing to build trust through openness, meaningful engagement, recognition of progress made and an honest acknowledgement of areas where further improvement is required.

Progress against the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan continues to be closely monitored. To date, 13 of the 28 improvement actions have been successfully completed and embedded into business-as-usual activity, with ongoing oversight transferring to the relevant action owners to ensure improvements are sustained. The remaining 15 actions are progressing as planned and continue to be monitored by the Culture Champions in collaboration with action owners, supported by the Service's governance arrangements and regular reporting through the Culture Improvement Dashboard.

The Service remains committed to embedding a positive organisational culture and delivering sustainable, long-term improvements that ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is an inclusive, respectful and supportive place to work for everyone.

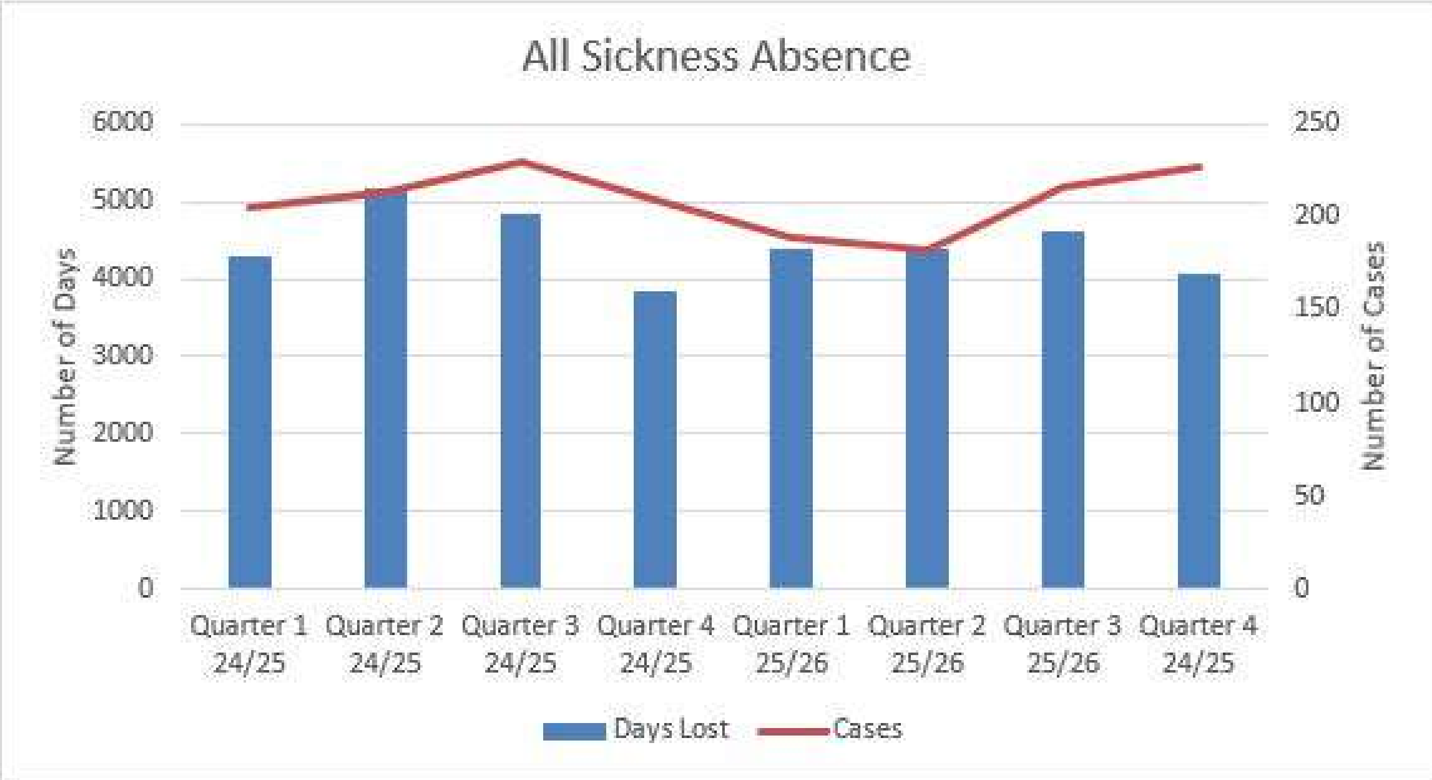
Action 5: Continue a positive and supportive process to improve attendance by providing excellent occupational health and welfare support.

Over the year, significant progress was made to improve employee support, attendance management and wellbeing across the Service. Work focused on making policies clearer, more supportive and better aligned with current legislation and best practice. This included continued review of the Attendance Management Policy, changes to staff contracts, and updates to processes around modified duties, medical appointments and injury-related support.

Support for employee health and wellbeing was strengthened through the ongoing implementation of the new Occupational Health contract, the introduction of feedback forms for Occupational Health and physiotherapy services, and improved monitoring of performance and reporting. Mental health support also developed during the year, with recommendations from a mental health review progressing, additional training for HR staff, and continued promotion of available internal and external support.

Further progress was made in areas of staff wellbeing, including menopause support, where training sessions, regular menopause cafés and a new working group helped build awareness and improve support available to employees. Work also continued on wider wellbeing initiatives, including the planned reintroduction of chaplaincy support.

Both short-term (1.09%) and long-term (3.89%) sickness absence have reduced year-on-year, and remains a key improvement.



Action 6: Transform the Service and its resources to inform future demand for people and skills and enable the Service to efficiently develop and build on the existing workforce and platforms to meet that demand.

This year, the Human Resources (HR) team made good progress with policies, procedures and staff welfare support. A wide range of training was delivered, including bystander training, investigative training, grievance and misconduct training, mediation training, and support for people with suicidal thoughts. Professional standards were strengthened by helping to build a UK-wide network and attending national events and workshops.

A number of important policies and procedures were reviewed and updated. This included work on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking, neonatal care, work experience, locker use, disciplinary procedures, grievances, market supplements and wider HR policy changes linked to new employment law. Several papers were prepared and presented to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) for decision-making, including postvention support, the Real Living Wage, private healthcare options and the Corporate Blue Light Card. Business continuity arrangements were also reviewed and updated for 2025.

There was also strong progress in recruitment, workforce representation and employee wellbeing. Recruitment processes were improved through new flowcharts, feedback forms, communications and ongoing work with the Talos recruitment portal.

Senior appointments were completed successfully, and the corporate induction handbook was updated.

A workforce representation strategy was also developed, which has created positive action materials for station visits, and contributed to wider wellbeing work including a menopause passport, the Fire Family Survey and peer monitoring activity with Healthy Working Wales.

Alongside workforce development initiatives, the Service continued to maintain effective systems and processes to support workforce planning, payroll administration and employee support, helping to ensure staff are paid accurately and receive the benefits and support to which they are entitled.

Action 7: Address and maintain the cyber security profile of the Service systems, aligning with evolving cyber threats.

The Service continues to face repeated attempts to gain unauthorised access to its IT systems. The ICT team works relentlessly to prevent these attacks and protect all Service electronic systems. Cyber-attacks are prolonged, ongoing, and can adapt quickly.

The following work has been completed to help prevent unauthorised access to computer systems:

- Firewalls have been put in place to help protect computer systems from unauthorised access. The infrastructure is now in place, but there remains a small amount of work required to complete this action. The ICT personnel need to arrange time to bring the network equipment down on sensitive sites, and that has been a challenge.
- The majority of the wireless equipment has been installed and tested to help provide secure and reliable access to our systems.
- Disaster recovery arrangements have been reviewed to help ensure services can be restored quickly if systems are disrupted.

Action 8: Deliver technical training, which includes the introduction of a phishing campaign, cyber training, and bespoke IT training.

To reduce the effects of cyber-attacks even further it is vital that all service staff remain vigilant when dealing with electronic communications.

All staff must undertake a 'GDPR and Cyber Security' training module annually, to keep up to date with legal requirements, using systems securely, and how to keep data secure.

During periods of targeted attacks, the ICT department will also issue electronic reminders about how to handle emails and other electronic communications safely, helping to further reduce the risk of unauthorised access to our network.

Action 9: Write a Social Partnership Report to comply with the requirements of Welsh Government, which meets approval of the Fire Authority.

The annual report has been approved by Union representatives and Fire Authority members and can be found here.

Action 10: Continue work undertaken by the Contaminants Group in relation to fire contaminants from all fires, and to progress best practices from Regional and National learning.

Regular meetings of the 'Contaminants Working Group' continued to take place throughout the year.

Breathing apparatus and respirator face-fit testing was undertaken in line with changes to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. This has been provided by an external company following a successful procurement process. This work may continue into the first few months of the new financial year.

As part of an operational exercise in the Conwy Tunnel, it was found that a sanitising wipe was the most effective product for operational staff to use when 'Showering within the hour' on return from an emergency incident.

Additionally, it has been recognised that many operational firefighters face time constraints that prevent them from thoroughly decontaminating themselves on return to a fire station. These constraints often stem from personal commitments outside of their fire-fighting role, such as primary employment, family responsibilities, childcare obligations or redirection to other emergency incidents.

As a result, the Service has procured sample-sized products that allows personnel to take the product home and complete the decontamination process there.

Action 11: Develop a 2026-29 Training and Development Strategy.

A new Training and Development Strategy was required to replace the previous three-year Strategy which ran from 2023-26.

This new Strategy will take into consideration the recommendations from reports such as Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (September 2024), which places a greater focus on initial training, maintenance of competence, management and leadership development, and command skills. In addition, it will be necessary to incorporate insights from the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser in Wales' review into operational preparedness at South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (Autumn 2024), which builds on the thematic review into firefighter training in Wales. These reports will influence how the Service continues to refine its approach to training staff, and ensure it is fully equipped to meet future demands and expectations.

The final Strategy has now been approved by the Service Leadership Team, ready to take effect in the new financial year.

Action 12: Continue to foster an inclusive workplace culture that empowers all staff members to excel and effectively address the diverse needs of our communities.

During National Hate Crime Awareness week (11 to 18 October), the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer attended the All-Wales National Hate Crime Event which was funded by the Welsh Government and organised by Victim Support Cymru and Wales Hate Support Centre. The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip spoke at the event. In her presentation, Jane highlighted the importance of reporting hate crime and challenging discrimination, harassment and prejudice. She also highlighted that one of the main equality objectives 2024-2028 is to tackle hate crime and discrimination and she acknowledged disability hate is a particularly huge problem in Wales.

Hate Crime Strand	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Percentage change 2023/24 to 2024/25
Race	71,995	87,905	84,039	77,901	82,490	6
Religion	4,527	6,510	6,513	6,973	7,164	3
Sexual Orientation	15,668	22,317	21,306	19,127	18,702	-2
Disability	9,418	13,611	13,637	11,131	10,224	-8
Transgender	2,510	3,920	4,477	4,258	3,809	-11
Total number of motivating factors	104,118	134,263	129,972	119,390	122,389	3
Total number of offences	99,813	128,485	123,033	113,166	115,990	2

Overall, there has been an increase of 5% in hate crime reporting in Wales. Although it was highlighted by Victim Support that under reporting is still an issue and unofficial reports of hate crime, especially disability hate crime has increased in Wales. Hate crime impacts confidence in people with disabilities, and can lead to social isolation, loneliness and have an adverse effect on mental and physical health.

During December the Service participated in 'Lead the Change Bystander Intervention' training. This training forms part of the Welsh Governments strategy to tackle Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. The training empowers those attending to safety challenge inappropriate attitudes and behaviours that are supportive of violence against women within the workplace, peer group or community.

The Service then delivered 'Bystander Training' to support staff in recognising and challenging attitudes and behaviours linked to violence, sexism and misogyny.
The training provided an overview of gender-based violence, addressed common myths about abuse, and introduced practical techniques for intervening safely and appropriately when inappropriate behaviour is identified. This forms part of the Service's wider cultural development work. Further training dates will be arranged in 2026 and staff will be invited to attend.

Action 13: Develop and deliver the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.

During the year, the Procurement function continued to strengthen its support across the Service. Regular meetings were held with departments to review existing contracts, plan future procurement activity and improve understanding of procurement requirements. This helped embed procurement into day-to-day business and made sure it was considered earlier in planning and decision-making.

A number of important improvements were made over the course of the year. Contract Procedure Rules were updated to reflect the Procurement Act 2023. Supporting documents, including the All-Wales Procurement Strategy, invitation to tender documents and the procurement pipeline, were also reviewed and updated.

The Service also registered on the central government platform for publishing procurement notices, helping to ensure compliance and improve transparency.

The year also saw investment in people and systems. A new procurement apprentice was appointed and has started studying towards qualifications through Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply courses.

New software was introduced to help monitor supply chain risk, and work began with the Finance team to improve the process for onboarding new suppliers. Training and awareness remained an important part of the work programme. Ongoing workshops were planned to help departments understand the Procurement Act 2023 and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act 2023. The development of a new business case document also helped ensure procurement is identified at an early stage, so that the correct and compliant route to market can be chosen.

Progress was also made on contract management systems. Work on the contract's module restarted with support from the Finance team, with testing and rollout planning taking place during the year. By the end of the reporting period, the module was ready to go live from 2 April 2026. This will help improve visibility of contracts across the Service and support compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.

Overall, the year was focused on strengthening procurement arrangements, improving compliance, building internal knowledge and putting the right systems and resources in place. Many of these developments are now becoming part of normal day-to-day working, providing a stronger foundation for the Procurement function going forward.

Action 14: Identify and implement digital improvements to the efficiency of the payroll function.

This year work focused on improving payroll and employee systems, strengthening internal processes and supporting the rollout of digital tools. The main areas of activity included:

1. Development of the Travel and Expenses Module:

Working with the software developer a new module was introduced to support the digital processing of mileage and subsistence claims submitted by Service staff. Training materials were produced to assist users which also supported the roll-out of the new module.

2. Improvements to payroll administration:

A review of payroll processes was undertaken, including work to reduce reliance on P11D forms (a UK statutory form submitted to HM Revenue & Customs by employers listing the benefits they provide). This is in anticipation of future legal requirements.

3. Changes to support employee benefits and leave processes:

The Cycle to Work Scheme process was reviewed and strengthened after eligibility checks were found to be inconsistent. The Pilot Leave Scheme was also extended into next year, with a further 17 stations joining the pilot. Feedback from participating stations has been broadly positive.

Action 15: Develop the financial planning process.

Throughout the year there was good progress in improving financial planning and budget management. A full review of the TechOne budget module was undertaken, with support from external consultants to improve calculations, data tables, and reporting. Templates used for budget-setting were also reviewed, to better capture the information needed, and provide clearer support for budget holders.

Work continued with TechOne consultants to improve forecasting arrangements within the financial system. Alongside this, the first draft of budget requests and departmental plans for the 2026-27 budget were received and reviewed, including supporting business cases. Pay budget workings were also updated to make collecting information, revising assumptions and uploading data into the financial system more efficient.

The Scheme of Financial Delegation was updated and approved, and work began to update the financial system, guidance and training materials to reflect these changes. A weekly report was introduced for requisitioners to prompt action on open purchase orders, supported by reminder communications about the correct purchase-to-pay process. The Budget Scrutiny Working Group process was completed, the draft budget was approved, and briefing information was shared with Directors of Finance along with indicative levies.

Performance also improved in invoice processing, with the average payment time being reduced to 28 days, bringing performance into compliance. Further work will continue during 2026-27 to increase the proportion of invoices paid within 30 days to above 95%. In addition, the Medium-Term Resource Strategy covering the period to 2030 was completed, along with the financial strategies and statement for 2026-27. A number of these improvements are now complete and will continue as part of business as usual.

Action 16: Monitor transformation and change management outcomes.

Preparing the Service for organisational resilience and future change, the HR department worked across key HR priorities, including:

- **Workforce Development and Inclusion**

The Corporate Induction Handbook has been updated, and Positive Action materials have been developed to support consistent engagement across the Service.

- **Policy Review and Legislative Compliance**

Human Resources policies and procedures are being reviewed in response to the Employment Rights Act 2025, with relevant legislative updates incorporated.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

The Service continues to support workplace health and wellbeing through participation in the Healthy Working Wales Peer Monitoring Programme.

- **External Complaints Procedures**

External complaints procedures are being reviewed, including options for improved reporting and case management.

- **Business Continuity and Organisational Resilience**

The Business Continuity Management Plan has been reviewed and updated for 2025, and a process flow chart has been developed to support consistent recruitment, movement, and transfer arrangements.

- **Partnership Working and Professional Standards**

Work has progressed on Blue Light corporate membership, Real Living Wage accreditation, and the development of a UK Fire and Rescue Service professional standards network.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation governing workplace health and safety in Great Britain. Work related incidents and near misses are monitored through the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee. Whilst it is not currently mandatory, public bodies are encouraged to include a summary of their health and safety performance in their annual reports.

Health and Safety

Safety event reporting statistics during financial year 2025/26

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

0.35% increase in accidents

290 safety events were reported between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, which compares with **289** in total for the comparable period in 24/25. This is a slight increase of **0.35%**.

105
Near Misses reported

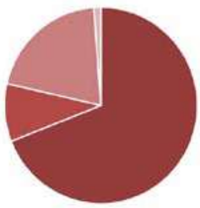
40
injuries reported

34%
of injuries resulted in time off work

24
reports of White Fleet vehicle damage

65
reports of Red Fleet vehicle damage

Vehicle Accident Type



Forward: **54 (61%)**
Reverse: **9 (10%)**
Stationary: **26 (29%)**

Our Prevention Principle

Working with partners to help make communities safer.

Reducing risks to our communities, especially for those people who may be more vulnerable, through our established intervention programmes such as Safe and Well Checks and the Phoenix Project.

Well-being goals met:

A resilient Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A healthier Wales

A globally responsible Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Utilise quality data to support fire safety activities, in particular the new risk-based approach, to identify and conduct a minimum of 17,500 high risk Safe and Well Checks.

A total of 19,374 Safe and Well Checks were delivered during the year, exceeding the Services' own target by 1,876.

The number of high risk Safe and Well Checks (SWAC) increased as an overall percentage, showing the Service has been successful in its work to reach more vulnerable people. This work has been achieved through the use of NHS Exeter Data and revised SWAC referral management.

Dashboards are now being created, and are refreshed daily, which provides prevention staff with clear and accurate information to assist with their individual workloads.

	SAWC by Priority (number)	SAWC by Priority (percentage)
High Priority	5,491	28.3%
Medium Priority	3,839	19.8%
Low Priority	10,044	51.9%
Total	19,374	100.0%

	SAWC by Referral (number)
From an Agency	3,917
Not from an Agency	15,457
Total	19,374

Action 2: Deliver intelligence led home safety interventions targeting the most vulnerable residents in our communities. We will deliver four targeted multi agency campaigns across North Wales.

Four multi-agency campaigns were undertaken:

1. During April staff hosted a Water Safety event on Bangor High Street.

   The aim of this event was to raise water awareness, and the potential dangers in and around water in the lead up to the warmer weather.

   Prevention staff hosted a 'pop-up' event on the High Street, showcasing Water Rescue equipment, and encouraging members of the public to stop and speak with firefighters to obtain water safety advice.

2. On the 1 October, the Service marked International Day of Older Persons by hosting a community event at Denbigh Fire Station, alongside partners, to promote the various support available to older members of our community and offer Safe and Well checks to those who need them.

   Members of the Prevention Team were on hand to provide important home fire safety information, with specific advice tailored to help combat some of the challenges faced by the older generation when it comes to keeping their homes fire safe. Home Safety Support Workers headed out to undertake Safe and Well checks in the local area, targeting households with older residents. They were joined by members of corporate staff who had volunteered to assist with visits, helping to ensure that some of the most vulnerable members of our community can feel fire safe in their homes.

3. In November the Service created and shared a number of videos via social media promoting cooking fire safety tips, and advice on what to do should a cooking fire get out of control.

   Cooking fires remain one of the most leading causes for emergency call outs to dwelling fires. Of the 322 accidental dwelling fires the Service attended during the year, 56 of them were as a direct cause of 'Cooking'.

   More detailed cooking safety information can be found here.

4. Fire Prevention staff and operational firefighters visited farmers' markets across North Wales and Shropshire to highlight the importance of following the Heather and Grass Burning Code. They provided advice directly to farmers and also distributed information leaflets.

Action 3: Develop localised area plans in line with the 2025-29 Community Risk Management Plan.

This action was discussed at the Service Leadership Team (SLT) 2025-26 planning day, and as part of the strategic risk assessment and planning framework, it was identified that there would be insufficient resources to deliver against this action.

SLT members choose not to implement this action at this time.

Action 4: Deliver 12 intelligence led multi-agency campaigns targeting those most vulnerable from Road Traffic Collisions and inland drowning incidents.

Road Safety Campaigns:

- Multiple sessions of 'Olivia's Story' were held throughout the year, with over 2,200 attendees. Olivia's story is based on a real-life event, using dashcam footage to highlight the dangers of reckless driving.

  Staff and colleagues from North Wales Police filmed a short video in collaboration with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai which was released on social media. The video explains what the Service hopes to achieve through the delivery of Olivia's Story, and also captured the thoughts and feelings of the students who had received the Olivia's Story session.

- BikerDown sessions were presented to over 100 bikers. Staff representatives attended the MCL Bikeshow in Birmingham to promote the BikerDown and BikerSafe courses, and were able to sign up over 300 people to attend local sessions. July saw the first BikerDown course to be held in Pwhelli. This was supported by representatives from the 'Mental Health Motorbike' initiative.

- Collaboration with North Wales Police continued with the launch of 'Operation Apex'. This is a highly visible campaign aimed at reducing motorcycle casualties and improving rider safety. As part of this initiative, two key routes now have PRIME (Perceptual Rider Information for Maximising Expertise and Enjoyment) road markings, to assist riders with handling corners.

- The Service continued its participation with 'Operation Ugain'. Through 'Operation Ugain' drivers travelling over the speed limit, can choose to take an alternative to penalty points and/or a fine. The alternative is a free 10-minute presentation delivered by fire service staff and aims to inform people about the dangers of speeding.

  Welsh Government funding for this collaborative work, has been extended due to the positive outcomes.

- Other road safety events included 'Biker Brew' events, and promoting the 'Fatal 5' Police campaign.

Water Safety Campaigns:

- Early in the year, water safety campaigns, such as #BeWaterAware and Float to Live, were promoted via social media, and a public engagement session in Bangor. Training was also delivered to DangerPoint rangers.

- A 'Spot the Difference' child safety campaign also helped raise awareness of water hazards through interactive sessions in schools and community groups.

- Water safety training was delivered to wardens from Eryri Nation Park, which consisted of a three-hour session, combing both theory and practical learning.

- During 'Drowning Prevention Week', operational staff visited a primary school, along with the 'Water Line Rescue Unit', from Bangor fire station.

- In July staff joined forces with partners for 'World Drowning Prevention Day', to help spread potentially lifesaving messages within our community areas. Two public water safety awareness events were held at Llyn Tegid, Bala, and Llyn Padarn, Llanberis. Both events saw staff undertake practical demonstrations and water safety activities.
- In November, Service staff welcomed colleagues from Llanberis Mountain Rescue, Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue, and Aberglasyn Mountain Rescue teams to Bangor Fire Station. This initiative was designed to enhance co-ordination and strengthen working relationships during water rescue incidents across the region.
- A new 'Swim Safety' pilot scheme is being developed. This is aimed at children aged nine through to 11 and will be undertaken at leisure centre's, to provide practical pool-based activities. The first sessions are planned to take place during 2026.

Action 5: Deliver bespoke, early intervention packages accredited through the King's Trust, adopting a trauma informed approach to develop safer, stronger, and more resilient children and young people (CYP).

Throughout the year, the Phoenix Project continued to deliver strong outcomes for young people referred by schools. During the year, 20 courses were delivered, all recording high completion rates.

Schools reported clear benefits from the programme, including 80% behaviour improvement in quarter one and 78% in quarter two, along with 100% positive feedback about the intervention in both quarters. In addition, 70% of participants in both quarters achieved a full Agored Cymru qualification.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of courses run	4	4	6	6
Number of CYP	33	29	55	55
% behaviour improvement reported	80%	78%	66%	73%
% positive feedback	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Agored Cymru	70%	70%	62%	92%
% CYP completed course	88%	86%	67%	92%

Alongside delivery, significant progress was made in developing the project's link with The King's Trust. During the year, the required policies were consulted on and submitted to the Service Leadership Team (SLT), and supporting impact assessments were shared with relevant leads. By quarter three, the Prevention Team was finalising the documentation needed to connect the Phoenix Project with The King's Trust framework, and by quarter four, accreditation had been approved. This means the Phoenix Team is now delivering in line with The King's Trust syllabus and qualification.

Quarter four also saw an increase in wider engagement activity. The team carried out nine school engagements, providing bespoke fire safety advice to more than 800 pupils. In the same quarter, six Phoenix courses were run with 55 pupils attending, showing continued growth in reach and demand for the programme.

Overall, this has been a positive year for the Phoenix Project, with strong participant outcomes, excellent feedback from schools, and important progress in securing accreditation and aligning the programme with The King's Trust.

Action 6: Provide staff with 12 Continuous Professional Development events throughout the year to build knowledge and understanding to better serve local communities.

The roles previously known as Partnership Managers have undergone a transformation to provide more focused and specialised leadership that better serves both our staff and the Service as a whole.

In line with this change, the title Partnership Manager is being replaced with Prevention Manager to reflect the proactive, community-focused nature of the roles.

Training activities undertaken by members of the Prevention Department included:

1. Deaf Awareness
2. Victim Support
3. Well-being Day
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training
5. Hard of Hearing – specific training delivered by 'Fireblitz'
6. Conflict resolution

Our Protection Principle

Making businesses safer together.

Providing businesses with expert guidance on fire protection to help ensure the safety of buildings, employees, and customers, thereby supporting businesses to grow. High-risk buildings are prioritised for inspections, contributing to overall public safety.

Well-being goals met:

A resilient Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A healthier Wales

A globally responsible Wales

A prosperous Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Develop all supervisory and flexi-duty system officers to Level 2 in Business Fire Safety.

The Service focused on training to achieve Level 4 qualifications in Fire Safety due to promotions, new starters and staff movement within the team.

This decision supports alignment with Risk Based Inspection Programme Key Performance Indicators and the National Fire Chiefs Council competency framework for Fire Safety – Protection. Expressions of interest have been issued and assessed centrally before course bookings are made. The Fire Engineering Technician has explored opportunities to enable internal delivery of the Level 2 course, including a visit to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

This action remains ongoing due to staff movement within the Service.

Action 2: Undertake an intelligence-led approach to our Risk Based Inspection Programme, to reduce injury and death from fire in domestic and non-domestic premises.

Protection staff took part in a UK-wide multi-agency operation implemented to tackle organised crime.

Operation Machinize is a nationally co-ordinated initiative led by the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), focusing on tackling the criminal abuse of cash-intensive high street businesses that are exploited to launder illicit funds and support wider organised crime.

Throughout 2025, officers from North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (NWROCU) worked alongside partners including HMRC, Trading Standards, Immigration Enforcement, Environmental Health, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS).

As part of this multi-agency approach, NWFRS officers and compliance officers from the Protection team carried out inspections to assess fire safety compliance under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

In November, Compliance Officers attended a landlords' forum at Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham in partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

The event aimed to provide fire safety guidance to current and potential landlords through presentations and networking opportunities, highlighting landlords' responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

It also served as a platform for the Service and WCBC to showcase their multi-agency partnership work across various property types, including takeaways, nail bars and Airbnb accommodations. This demonstrated that regulatory efforts extend beyond Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and single-occupancy premises to ensure all accommodation meets the same standards. The presentation emphasised the comprehensive behind-the-scenes work undertaken to identify risks, follow up on concerns and take appropriate enforcement or prohibition action when necessary.

Action 3: Undertake monthly business fire safety reassurance campaigns to promote safety in commercial premises.

Over the year, work in this area has continued despite ongoing staff shortages, which have limited the amount of activity that could be carried out. Even so, business-as-usual work has continued with partners, and some targeted action has been delivered where capacity allowed.

This included joint work with partner agencies on specific premises and risks, support for enforcement activity, and ongoing work with HMP Berwyn and other stakeholders to help reduce fire incidents. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service also supported training activities for health and safety staff and inspectors.

In the final quarter of the year, there was a multi-agency visit to Flats near Menai Bridge which led to several enforcement notices being issued to the property directors.

Action 4: Work with partner agencies and deliver seasonal interventions and engagements to manage our landscape and reduce wildfires.

The Fire Authority adopted the National Fire Chiefs Council definition for recording wildfires, which is defined as any uncontrolled vegetation fire where a decision or action is needed about its suppression. A wildfire will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Involves a geographical area of at least one hectare (10,000 square metres)
- Has a sustained flame length of more than 1.5 metres
- Requires a committed resource of at least four fire and rescue service appliances / resources
- Requires resources to be committed for at least six hours
- Present a serious threat to life, environment, property and infrastructure

The Service attended 40 wildfires during the year. Of these, 33 were started accidentally and seven were thought to have started deliberately.

Despite there being an overall reduction in the number of wildfires attended compared to last year, the number of those started deliberately increased by three.

The Service was particularly busy during August when substantial incidents were attended at Mynydd Bodafon in Llannerchymedd, Anglesey and Cwm Mountain in Llandudno, Conwy and in Trefriw, Sarnau, Denbighshire.

The graph below shows how emergency attendance to wildfires can vary year-on-year.

In February the new ‘Argocat’ vehicle became operational. This is an all-terrain vehicle, which will provide additional support for both personnel and equipment. This vehicle will be based at Colwyn Bay fire station but will be used to attend emergency incidents across North Wales as needed.

Our Response Principle

Providing an effective emergency response.

Being ready to respond when you need us: to protect what matters to you, to save lives, reduce harm, and protect homes and businesses.

Well-being goals met:

A resilient Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A healthier Wales

A more equal Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Design, procure, and deliver firefighting appliances with enhancements that will provide a clean cab solution, minimising the risk, as far as reasonably practical, of contaminants exposure to our fire fighters.

During the year, five new emergency response appliances completed acceptance testing and were brought into service. Each appliance includes the 'Clean Cab' design, which helps reduce firefighters' exposure to fire contaminants. The design was developed through research and development led by the Contaminants working group, with input from key stakeholders across the Service and representatives from the Fire Brigades Union. The appliances also include new 22mm hosereels and branches, in line with recommendations from the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor and Inspector for Wales report on responding to domestic dwelling fires. This latest delivery is the second to use this design, which will now form the basis for future appliance builds as we continue to improve the fleet through user feedback and ongoing replacement programmes.

Action 2: Install Flow Meters on pumping appliances, as a response to learning outcomes from Grenfell and a recommendation from the Chief Fire & Rescue Advisor in Wales.

During the year, progress continued on expanding the use of flow meters across the red fleet (vehicles that attend emergency incidents). Five vehicles are already in service with flow meters fitted, and plans are still being developed for the remaining vehicles and the timescale for completion. A further eight kits were ordered, with the Fleet department continuing to pursue delivery. Once received, Fleet department staff plan to install the hardware on the platforms, with support from Emergency One for software installation and commissioning. Contact has also been made with Emergency One to arrange training for Fleet staff in May or June 2026 so they can install the hardware for the eight flow meters already owned. However, there is still no confirmed delivery date for the remaining ordered kits.

Action 3: To lead and coordinate the upgrade of technology systems across the Service to ensure they are cyber-secure and fit for purpose.

An audit of all ICT services was conducted together with an inspection of cyber security stance. Work has been carried out to replace out-of-date operating systems and decommission unsupportable systems where the technical risks could not be mitigated. This ensures that critical systems are ready and robust at the moment they're depended upon.

Action 4: Support and implement the delivery of decisions and recommendations from the Fire Authority Emergency Cover Working Group.

The Emergency Cover Review (ECR) was a phased programme of change to improve the effectiveness and resilience of emergency cover across North Wales, particularly in rural areas, without increasing the budget. Following the Fire and Rescue Authority's reaffirmation of this commitment in early 2025, officers, the Transformation Team, representative bodies and Fire Brigades Union officials worked together to develop a collective agreement and establish the Collective Agreement Implementation Group (CAIG). This work led to pilot arrangements designed to make the 178 posts across the 22 watches at the eight wholetime/day-crewed stations more self-sufficient, reducing reliance on wider establishment posts to cover absences and creating capacity to support new approaches such as nucleus crewing in rural areas including Dolgellau and Porthmadog.

During 2025, CAIG oversaw implementation, staff communication and the development of supporting processes, including FAQs, recruitment activity, shift alignment and the Wholetime Rostering Policy. Shift alignment was introduced from 2 September 2025 and nucleus crewing pilots were launched to strengthen rural daytime cover, with communications consistently emphasising collaboration, staff support and regular review. Early feedback and monitoring suggest the changes are beginning to improve resilience, with encouraging signs of better daytime pump availability in rural areas, reduced need for additional hours, and wider benefits through community safety activity, local engagement and stronger support for on-call crews.

Action 5: Increase the on-call establishment to facilitate an improvement in appliance availability across the region.

Recruitment numbers were assessed and reviewed, and a presentation was delivered to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) in April.

As part of a more localised approach to on-call recruitment, individual station needs were reviewed and discussed at every 'Recruitment and Availability Group' meeting.

During January the Service released new on-call recruitment promotional materials on social media.

The end of the year recorded an improvement to the number of on-call firefighters available to attend emergency incidents; up to 502 people from 489 people at the beginning of the year.

On-Call Station Availability

The below table shows the average pump availability for all On-call fire stations between 06:00 and 18:00. The availability is broken down by month, showing the respective weekday and weekend/bank holiday availability.

The table is representative of all On-call watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of On-call Stations Availability 06:00-18:00																
Day/Month	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Q1**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Q2**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Q3**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Q4**	**Whole Year**
Weekday	6	6	5	**6**	6	4	6	**5**	6	7	7	**6**	7	7	6	7	**6**
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	14	14	12	**13**	11	12	12	**12**	12	11	9	**11**	11	11	10	11	**12**
Overall Average	9	9	7	**8**	7	7	7	**7**	7	8	8	**8**	9	8	7	8	**8**
2025/26	7	7	6	**7**	6	7	6	**6**	6	7	9	**7**	10	9	9	9	**7**

Please note that availabilities have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The below table reflects the number of On-call firefighter starters and leavers during quarter two, compared to the same quarter of last year. Many of the On-call firefighter leavers this quarter have migrated to the Wholetime Duty System.

Year	Starters	Leavers	Position Headcount at Year End	Headcount (single role only)
Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	**86**	**65**	**487**	**425**
Apr 2025 – Mar 2026	**88**	**71**	**512**	**427**
+/-	**2**	**6**	**25**	**2**

Starters – the number of On-call firefighter starters from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts.

Leavers – the number of On-call firefighter leavers from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts, or migrations to the Wholetime Duty System.

Position Headcount at Quarter End – the number of On-call firefighter positions that are filled, including those who have more than one role.

Headcount (single role only) – the number of individuals who are on the On-call firefighter only i.e., those who do not have two roles in the Service.

Action 6: Create a schedule of exercises in line with the Local Resilience Forum risk profile of North Wales.

A new electronic calendar featuring exercise events taking place across the Service area was introduced. This provides staff with an early awareness of exercises taking place and allows them the opportunity to express an interest in taking part or being a spectator.

Station Managers and staff from the Control Room are able to add details of any upcoming live exercises or tabletop exercises to ensure that the calendars are as up to date as possible.

In total 20 exercises were undertaken during the year, which included:

- **Electric vehicle incident training:** Crews in Holyhead practiced responding to an electric van fire following a collision, focusing on safely extinguishing EV fires using specialist blankets.
- **Building fire and Breathing Apparatus (BA) emergency exercise:** Firefighters trained for a first-floor building fire with casualties, testing incident command, BA procedures, search and rescue, and emergency response after a simulated ceiling collapse trapped BA crews.
- **Water outage multi-agency training:** Partners across public services took part in a Colwyn Bay exercise based on a major water outage, reviewing lessons learned, improving coordination, and strengthening preparedness for large-scale incidents.

Action 7: Conduct a review of our fleet of special appliances to ensure they remain suitable to meet the current and future risk/demand profile.

Following a competitive tender process, Emergency One Group (UK) Ltd was awarded the contract to supply the Service's new 'Turntable Ladder' vehicle. This is a major investment and forms part of the ongoing replacement programme for aerial appliances that are reaching the end of their operational life. The specification and design were developed through a working group involving staff from across the Service, with strong emphasis on feedback from end users. Since the contract award, colleagues in Fleet, Technical Operations and Procurement departments have continued to work closely with the supplier to finalise the design, identify improvements and achieve value for money. This collaborative approach has helped create a clear specification for the new appliance and will support the project as it moves into the next stages of build and delivery.

Action 8: Continue multiagency consultation response and risk management of large battery and energy storage systems (BESS).

Over the past year, strong multi-agency collaboration has continued between the BESS group and the Regional Minerals and Waste Service, including close working with the lead officer and planning team. A key development has been the agreement to ensure that partners are automatically notified when private companies submit planning applications for renewable energy projects. This improved information-sharing process will apply across all six North Wales councils, helping partners stay informed and respond more effectively.

Regular meetings have been held throughout the year to maintain momentum and coordination. Alongside this, ongoing work has focused on identifying and mapping renewable energy sites, further improving awareness and supporting both future planning and operational response.

The service has also explored new equipment to address emerging risks, including extinguishers designed for solar panel (PV) fires. These have been assessed for suitability on appliances and are now scheduled for purchase in the 2026–27 budget.

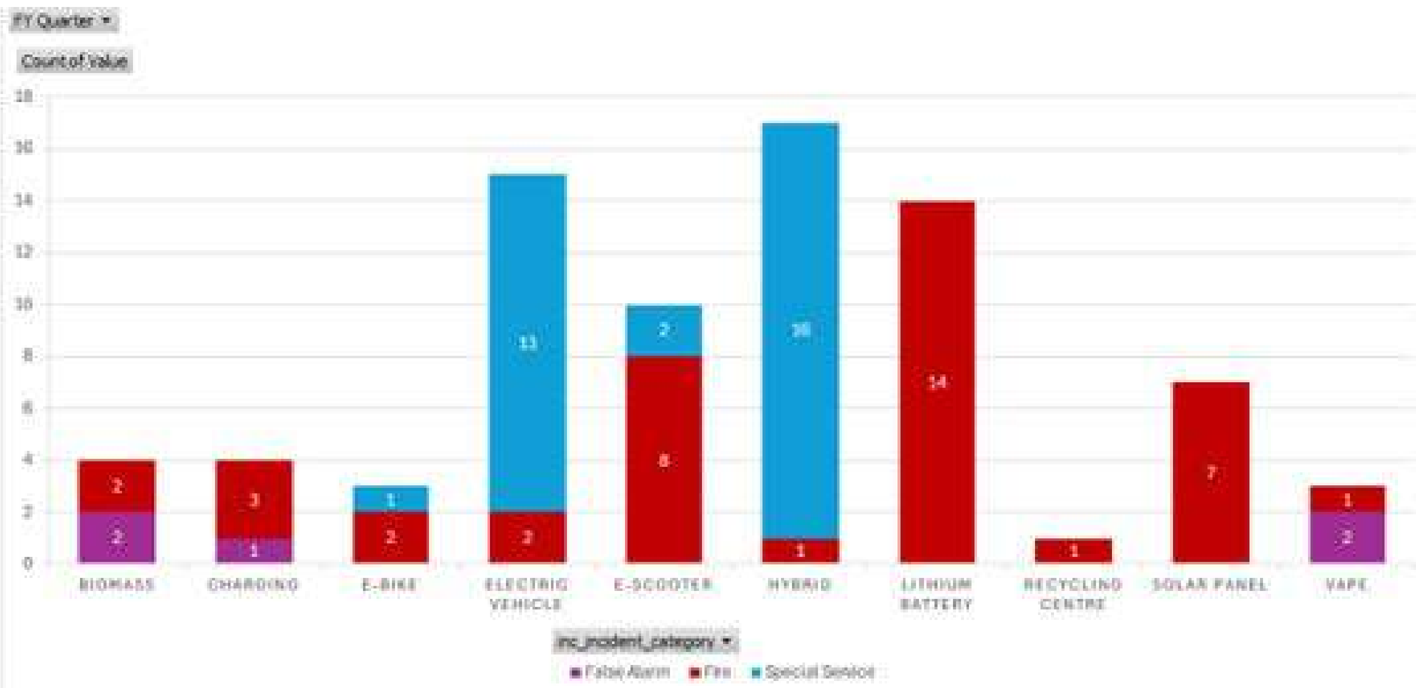
Overall, the year has seen steady progress, with enhanced partnership working, better information sharing, and continued steps towards strengthening the response to renewable energy-related risks.

Emergency incidents attended by the Service during the year.

As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

- Electric Vehicles
- Wind Farms
- Devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries

Many of these technologies do not have dedicated reporting categories within national fire and rescue incident data systems. As a result, key word searches are conducted on incident logs in order to identify and analyse trends.



Although Electric vehicles and Hybrid vehicles feature heavily in the above figures for 2025-26, the chart demonstrates that most of these incidents were not fire calls.

Action 9: Continue to develop the business case for a new Training and Development Centre.

Progress has continued throughout the year on developing the business case for a new Training and Development Centre, now named **Hwb Awen**. Early site works began in summer 2025, including fencing, environmental surveys, vegetation clearance and preparation of the land. Planning remains at the outline stage, with detailed design work ongoing.

Strong progress has been made on design and planning, supported by a newly appointed design team and input from staff, working groups and visits to other fire service training facilities. Environmental considerations have also been carefully managed, including protection of wildlife on site.

Engagement has been a key focus, with regular communication, staff visits, and drop-in sessions helping to gather feedback and shape the development. This feedback has already influenced plans, such as including overnight accommodation and ensuring facilities meet operational training needs.

A major milestone was the approval of the outline of the Business Case which was approved by members at the Fire Authority meeting in January. Alongside this, branding work has progressed following a staff vote to name the centre Hwb Awen.

Overall, the project is progressing well, with steady development of plans, strong staff involvement, and early sitework completed or nearing completion, keeping the long-term goal of a new training centre on track for delivery.

Action 10: Review and implement relevant recommendations of the Grenfell Tower inquiry phase 2 report, to improve operational preparedness and response, firefighter training and firefighter safety.

Over the year, steady progress has been made toward completing all recommendations, although some areas remain only partially compliant due to the complexity and nature of the work.

Key improvements have been achieved, including the introduction of digital handheld radios, which has enabled some recommendations to be fully completed. A small number of areas will remain partially compliant in the short term while further work is carried out.

There has also been a strong focus on improving evacuation procedures for tall buildings. Learning has been shared through collaboration with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, including presentations, joint exercises, and observation of live training scenarios. These activities have helped inform local review work, with the Tall Buildings Group assessing how best to adopt or adapt these procedures in North Wales.

Exercises have been carried out to test evacuation arrangements, with debriefs identifying areas for further improvement. These findings will help shape future changes and ensure continued progress.

Overall, the year has seen ongoing improvement, with practical changes implemented, strong partnership learning, and continued work to address remaining compliance gaps.

Action 11: Continue with the Training Towers replacement programme.

The training tower replacement and renovation programme was agreed in line with 2024-25 capital budget planning. In addition, an inspection programme was introduced and a RAG priority list created for all training towers across North Wales Fire & Rescue Service. Unfortunately, due to external supply issues and delays with the introduction of the estates project management team, key deadlines have been missed with training tower replacements being delayed and placed into forthcoming planning life cycles.

Our Environment Principle

Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.

Adopting eco-friendly practices in our daily operations to cut down on carbon emissions and other environmental impacts and raise environmental awareness amongst our staff and our communities.

Well-being goals met:

A resilient Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A healthier Wales

A globally responsible Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Review stock items and develop best working practices in order to improve efficiency and management of stock levels.

Over the year, we continued to improve stock management and strengthen working relationships with other departments to make stores processes more efficient. We reviewed stock levels regularly, reduced unnecessary stock holding and worked with colleagues to improve ordering, communication and day-to-day processes.

We regularly reviewed minimum stock levels whenever orders were placed to make sure stock levels remained appropriate and products were still needed. We built stronger working relationships with other departments, including taking part in recruitment and availability meetings so stores could be involved earlier and more effectively.

We reviewed welfare vehicle stock provisions, reduced waste and agreed a simpler list of frequently requested items with the Operations Department.

Additional wildfire kit was received to improve stock levels, and barcoding was completed alongside changes to the laundry process.

We continued to improve joint processes with Operations, including out-of-hours procedures, leaver kits, promotion-related kit and emergency kit arrangements.

We began sourcing a new supplier for 'undress kit' because stock levels had fallen and the previous supplier no longer offered the same style or material.

The year-end stock take was completed, with positive progress in reducing the amount of stock held and further work planned to improve the process.

This work will continue as part of business as usual, with the stores team reviewing systems and making the best use of technology each Wednesday.

Arrangements are also being made to attend supply chain meetings with other public sector organisations using TechOne.

Action 2: Expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) network across the Service.

Work has been carried out to expand the EVCP network across the Service in order to operate a greater number of Electric Vehicles.

Grant funding was approved, and two single socket chargers have now been installed at Wrexham fire station, and one twin socket charger installed at Dolgellau fire station.

A trial was successfully concluded which allows Service staff to use the EVCP network to charge their own vehicles using an app to make payment for the electricity consumed.

A draft policy and procedure has been written which allows not only Service personnel but also allow external public organisations to charge their electric vehicles using these newly installed electric chargers.

All fire stations and other fire related sites now have at least one EVCP.

Action 3: Procure light vehicles in order to maintain the age profile at a reasonable level and ensure that our light vehicle fleet is reliable, with the latest safety standards for our staff and as environmentally efficient as possible.

Work started with identifying suitable vehicles within Service budget, with zero emissions vehicles being prioritised in accordance with Welsh Government Carbon Budget 2 and the Services 'Fleet Decarbonisation Plan'.

In total 53 light vehicles (cars and vans) have been successfully procured during the year, although arrangements had to the initial allocation plans, to accommodate individual requirements.

Action 4: To transition existing diesel use vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) use vehicles.

So far, no major issues have been identified with the HVO trial at Deeside Fire Station, so it is expected that work with the provider will continue. There are still several weeks left before planning applications for the next seven fire station sites are decided. Based on how the BSmart back-end system operated at Deeside Fire Station, it appears to work well and provides effective tracking and oversight.

Action 5: Upgrade the Building Management System to negate the impact of terminated BT copper lines.

Progress against this action has been delayed due to the cost associated with replacing the existing traditional boilers. At this stage, it is considered more cost effective to replace the entire boiler system at the appropriate time, rather than carry out interim works to the boiler panels in support of this action.

Action 6: Monitor and report on energy, water, and waste data including reporting to Welsh Government on carbon reporting.

The Service has closely monitored energy and corporate water consumption, as well as our waste outputs to identify ways we can improve our operational efficiency and reduce our environmental impacts.

We have worked closely with the Welsh Government Energy Service to improve the way we calculate and report on our carbon emissions, by gathering more specific environmental impact data from our suppliers. This reporting forms an integral part of our work towards the ambition for a net zero public sector in Wales by 2030.

Recognition of Our Collaborative Working

Definition of Collaboration

"the act of working together with other people or organisations to create or achieve something".

Moorland Partnership Project

Denbighshire County Council's countryside team received the Community Safety Partner Award for its Moorland Partnership Project at an awards night.

Denbighshire County Council's countryside team receiving the Community Safety Partner Award. *(Image: County Voice)*

The project, run in partnership with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, supports the fire service in tackling dangerous wildfires.

Councillor Alan James, lead member for local development and planning, said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the team for achieving this great award.

"This reflects some of the vital services that the team provide in dangerous situations and it serves as a great example of what an effective collaborative approach can achieve.

"Our countryside rangers work tirelessly to ensure that residents and visitors to the county are able to enjoy our vast landscape and it's great that their hard work has been recognised with this award."

Earlier this year, the team supported the fire service during a four-day multi-agency operation on the Berwyn range, where a wildfire affected nearly 350 hectares of moorland on Moel Fferna.

The partnership has continued beyond the emergency response, with rangers and fire crews working together on wildfire training exercises and public awareness campaigns.

These efforts aim to promote the responsible use of fires and BBQs in the countryside, making sure everyone understands the serious dangers they can pose to our National landscape.

Disability Confident 'Employer Status' Accreditation

The Service successfully achieved the Disability Confident Level 2 'Employer' accreditation.

The Disability Confident scheme is a UK government initiative designed to support employers in recruiting, retaining, and developing disabled people.

This achievement clearly demonstrates to prospective and existing employees how the Service is following best practice across various areas of work, and is a step up from the Level 1 'Commitment' status achieved in 2022.


disability confident EMPLOYER

This is to certify that

North Wales Fire & Rescue Service
DCS014138
is a Disability Confident Employer

Period of award: 02/09/2025 to 29/08/2028
Issue date: 02/09/2025

As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- have undertaken and successfully completed the Disability Confident self-assessment
- are taking all of the core actions to be a Disability Confident employer
- are offering at least one activity to get the right people for our business and at least one activity to keep and develop our people

Find out more about Disability Confident at:
www.gov.uk/disability-confident
#DisabilityConfident

A task and finish group of Service staff helped to assess our current position. The group worked together to capture evidence of inclusive practices and highlight gaps and opportunities to improve in the future. The task and finish group was made up of 12 representatives from across the Service, who met three times in July and August to drive forward this work.

The group members all made important contributions in the meetings, with many also conducting vital research and evidence gathering.

Chief Fire Officer Dawn Docx said "Gaining this advanced level accreditation is a positive example of collaboration and team work".

Real Living Wage Accreditation

The Service have also achieved real living wage accreditation, becoming the 18th public body in Wales to do so, and the first in North Wales.

Our Living Wage commitment will see everyone working at the Service receive a minimum hourly wage of £13.45 - higher than the government minimum for over 21s, which currently stands at £12.21 per hour.

The office for the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales tells us that we are based in a region where 15.8% of jobs earn less than they need to get by - with around 199,000 jobs paying less than the real Living Wage.

The Living Wage Foundation's real Living Wage remains the only UK wage rate independently calculated based on the cost of living, rising annually based on living costs.

Our people are at the heart of everything we do.

By becoming a Living Wage accredited employer, we are reaffirming our commitment to fairness and ensuring that everyone who works for us is paid a wage that reflects the real cost of living.

It's all about doing the right thing for our staff and recognising the vital contribution they make to our communities every day.

Performance Information Summary

The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015 introduced three statutory performance indicators that accompany locally collected sector indicators.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:	2024-25		2025-26	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Fires attended	1,804	26.07	2,043	29.31
False alarms attended	3,264	47.17	3,209	46.03
Road traffic collisions	255	3.69	297	4.26
Other emergency incidents attended	1,166	16.85	1,065	15.28
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population				
Fire deaths and injuries	49	7.08	55	7.89
Deaths and injuries arising from fires started accidentally	45	6.50	53	7.60
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population				
Dwelling fires confined to room of origin	308	87.01%	282	87.58%
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended				

All Wales Sector Indicators

Sector indicators were introduced for 2015 and agreed to be collected and shared by all three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

ALL WALES SECTOR INDICATORS:	2025-26 North Wales FRS		Mid & West Wales FRS		South Wales FRS	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Deliberate fires	544	7.80	1,509	16.42	4,386	27.92
Accidental fires (or motive not known)	1,499	21.50	1,632	17.76	1,791	11.40
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population						
Fire related fatalities	2	0.29	4	0.44	9	0.57
Injuries caused by fires	53	7.60	24	2.61	54	3.44
Fire related fatalities in accidental dwelling fires	2	0.29	2	0.22	9	0.57
Fire related fatalities in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	1	0.11	0	0.00
Fire related injuries in accidental dwelling fires	30	4.30	19	2.07	46	2.93
Fire related injuries in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	2	0.22	8	0.51
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population						
Dwelling fires	346	10.29	428	9.68	643	9.06
Accidental fires in dwellings	325	9.67	393	8.89	587	8.27
Deliberate fires in dwellings	21	0.62	35	0.79	56	0.79
AFA false alarms in dwellings	1,481	44.04	1,528	34.56	2,182	30.73
Where the rate is based on 10,000 dwellings						
Fires in non-domestic premises	155	4.65	143	3.54	361	6.88
AFA false alarms in non-domestic	379	11.37	325	8.05	1,535	29.24
Where the rate is based on 1,000 non-domestic premises						
Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm was not fitted	45	13.01	134	31.31	245	38.10
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended						

The Dwelling Fire Response Charter in 2025-26

During 2012 the three Welsh fire and Rescue Authorities jointly developed an all-Wales Charter to ensure that wherever people live in Wales, they can expect to be helped and supported to remain safe from fire in their homes. They should also be able to expect that if a fire does break out, they will receive a prompt, effective and professional emergency response to their call for assistance.

The Charter makes seven specific commitments that the Fire and Rescue Authority will:

1. Take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.
2. React quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.
3. Attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.
4. Deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.
5. Help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.
6. Investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.
7. Strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

The following pages provide information about our compliance with these commitments during 2025-26.

For consistency, we use a standard narrative for reporting against the Charter each year and only update the figures within the narrative framework.

1. We will take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people

We are committed to taking the lead in maintaining a downward trend in the incidence of dwelling fires and associated casualties in Wales.

In 2025-26 we provided advice and encouragement to people on how they can prevent fires from starting in their home and how they can keep themselves safe from fire.

Our prevention activity included delivering 19,374Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs) to householders, and 4,110 children and young people at key stages 1 - 4 received a fire safety talk.

During 2025-26 we attended 322 accidental dwelling fires. As a consequence of those fires, there were 2 recorded fatalities, but 29 people sustained injuries. The number of accidental dwelling fires in the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) area has remained consistent, with 338 accidental fires also attended during 2024-25.

The number of accidental dwelling fires in the FRA area remains at their lowest level in the past five years.

2. We will react quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire

We are committed to reacting quickly and efficiently when emergency 999/112 calls are put through to us by the operator.

Our emergency fire control facility remains available around the clock every day of the year, with special arrangements in place for a seamless transfer of calls from one control facility to another in the event of serious disruption or a surge in the number of calls coming in at the same time.

Sophisticated mapping and electronic systems help us to: a) identify the location of the reported incident and b) send the most appropriate available resource to attend the incident.

In 2025-26, we handled a total of 15,972 emergency 999/112 calls. We were able to obtain enough information about dwelling fire incidents to alert the appropriate initial response within 90 seconds on 79.2% of occasions and between 91 and 120 seconds on 10.9% of occasions.

However, we know that the speed of call handling – although important - is not the only relevant yardstick. Knowing where our services are needed requires specialist skills to effectively glean information from callers who may, for example, be unfamiliar with the area they are in, be frightened or in distress, be very young, or have communication or language difficulties.

Another important skill is recognising when a caller is abusing the 999/112 system by falsely claiming that there is an emergency when, in fact, there is not. It is a criminal offence to knowingly make false calls to the emergency services. Sadly, that does not seem to deter a minority of people who tie up the 999 lines and divert services away from people who may be in a genuinely life-threatening situation. Every time we turn out to one of these malicious false alarms, it wastes both time and money, and also places the rest of the community at higher risk.

In 2025-26, we received 124 malicious false alarms. In 57.3% of cases, we were able to establish that these calls were not genuine and so avoided needlessly mobilising resources to attend.

3. We will attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them

Once we have answered the emergency 999/112 call and allocated the most appropriate resources to make up the initial attendance at the incident, our next priority is to get to the incident quickly, safely and properly equipped to deal with it.

Response times can be effected by a number of different factors, including the urban/rural geography and the nature of road networks in the area.

Speed of response to dwelling fires is extremely important, but we cannot over- emphasise the importance of preventing those fires from happening in the first instance, and of having at least one working smoke alarm fitted and a pre- planned escape route in case a fire does occur. However, if a dwelling fire has occurred, we ensure that our firefighting crews are properly equipped to deal with it.

We equip our firefighters with high quality personal protective equipment and firefighting equipment. We require them to be operationally fit and healthy, and we make sure that their skills are routinely tested and exercised. We also routinely check that the way our crews dealt with incidents was in accordance with accepted firefighting procedures.

We take the safety of our firefighters very seriously, given the nature of the work that they undertake. In 2025-26, our crews attended 2,043 fires in a variety of different types of premises and at outdoor locations. Whilst fighting those fires, 8 operational staff received an injury.

4. We will deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally

We are committed to dealing with fires effectively, efficiently and professionally. To this end, we equip our highly trained fire crews with the right skills, knowledge, information, firefighting equipment and command support so that whatever the circumstances of the dwelling fire, they will be correctly prepared to deal with it.

In 2025-26, of all the dwelling fires that we attended, 88% were successfully contained within the room of origin, without spreading any further. Although, a number of factors could contribute to this statistic that would be outside the control of the attending crews such as how long it took for someone to discover the fire in the first instance, whether

or not internal doors had been shut to help prevent the spread of the fire, and how far away from a fire station the dwelling was located, we still consider this to be a reasonable indicator of our firefighting success.

We recognise the importance of research and equipment improvements, and ensure that we invest time and effort in staying in touch with the latest developments.

We also take very seriously the professional image of the fire and rescue service. We place great emphasis on the personal qualities and attributes of all our operational staff, as well as their physical and psychological fitness and the high standard of their operational and management training.

We encourage all our staff to adhere to a set of core values that were adopted nationally by the UK Fire and Rescue Service. This expresses our commitment to valuing service to the community, people, diversity and improvement.

5. We will help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires

We are committed to helping to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

A fire in the home can leave people feeling extremely vulnerable.

When people have lost their possessions, they will have need for practical as well as emotional support. When people have been injured or killed in the fire, the experience can affect whole communities as well as the individual and his or her immediate friends and family. For this reason, the fire and rescue service's role in supporting communities does not end when the fire was extinguished and everyone was accounted for.

In all cases, the cause of the fire will be investigated and carefully recorded. Every detail of how and where the fire started, how far it spread, any special circumstances, and any particular factors that contributed to the fire will be recorded as a source of future learning, research and monitoring.

If there are reasons to believe that a fire was started deliberately in a dwelling, either by someone living there or by someone else, this will be followed up with the police and other relevant agencies.

In some premises, such as blocks of flats or houses occupied by a number of different tenants, the post-incident investigations might indicate that a landlord had failed to ensure the necessary level of fire safety. Our specialist fire investigators might then be involved in a criminal investigation and court proceedings.

If a fire is found to have started accidentally, we might undertake some form of community safety activity or campaign in the vicinity, offering advice and reassurance by way of free SAWCs.

6. We will investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so

We always investigate the causes of dwelling fires. In many cases the cause and origin of a fire will be very clear and straightforward, but in others a more in- depth, forensic investigation will be required to ascertain the most likely cause of the fire. In 2025-26, 19 dwelling fires were recorded as having an unknown cause.

If a crime is suspected, the investigation of the fire will be conducted with the police. People suspected of deliberately setting fire to a dwelling are likely to face criminal prosecution, although in some cases this may not be the only course of action available, for example if the fire was started by a young child or by a person attempting suicide.

In 2025-26, we attended 346 fires in dwellings, of which 21 were found to have been started deliberately.

In some residential premises, such as flats and houses of multiple occupation, the communal and shared areas are covered by regulations that require whoever is responsible for those premises (such as the landlord or the premises manager) to have good fire safety arrangements in place.

Failure to do so can lead to the closure of the premises and prosecution of the person responsible with the prospect of imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

As an enforcing authority, we ensure that responsible persons fulfil their obligations under this legislation and can select from a range of enforcement options available to us, depending on the seriousness and risk posed by the contravention.

In 2025-26, we served six enforcement notices and three prohibition notices. No formal cautions or prosecutions were concluded during the year.

7. We will strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do

We continuously strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

Under legislation, Fire and Rescue Authorities are classed as 'Welsh Improvement Authorities' and are expected to routinely review and continuously improve their own performance through a formal process of setting, implementing and reporting against annual improvement objectives.

We do not limit our improvement activity to this formal annual process; high standards and continual improvement form an integral part of our everyday running of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Examples of improvement activities that go on include:

- Responding positively to peer reviews, audits and inspections.
- Responding positively to consultation responses, feedback from stakeholders, complaints and compliments.
- Learning from our experiences, such as from post-incident debriefs, reports of accidents, or 'near misses'.
- Contributing to working groups, sharing good practice, and learning from research undertaken.
- Taking opportunities to learn from, and with, other organisations through partnerships, committees, boards and professional associations.
- Planning for potential challenges in order to maintain our operations, such as through business continuity management processes.
- Planning for potential challenges to future service delivery, such as through local resilience forums.
- Continuously developing the technical and professional skills of our staff.
- Maintaining and renewing our physical and computerised assets such as our equipment, vehicles, buildings and technology.

What Others Said About Us

Audit Wales – Well-being Objectives

Their report can be found here.

Other Information

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External information sources used in compiling this document:

- Wales Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics
- Wales Future Trends Report (2021)

Intervention in the event of failure or potential failure to comply:

The Welsh Government has powers of intervention:

- under section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the National Framework. In such cases, section 23 - Intervention Protocol would apply.
- under section 29 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is at risk of failing, to comply with the Measure. However, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, Welsh Ministers may only intervene after they have offered voluntary support to the Authority under section 28 of the Measure.

Consultations

Each year the Authority seeks the opinions and views of the North Wales public and other stakeholders as part of its process of developing its strategic plans and objectives.

Public consultations are listed below:

Title	Consultation	Publication	For year
Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27	Autumn 2025	Spring 2026	2026-27
Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-26	Autumn 2024	Spring 2025	2025-26
Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	2024-29
Emergency Cover Review	Summer/Autumn 2023	Winter 2023	2023-24

Recent staff surveys are listed below:

Title	Consultation	
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2025	3 October – 14 November 2025
Crest Advisory Cultural Review	Autumn 2024	23 August - 11 October 2024
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2023	18 September – 16 October 2023
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2021	18 October – 08 November 2021

Glossary and Definitions

Fires

All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.

Primary Fires

These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.

Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involve casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.

Secondary Fires

Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires. Secondary fires are those that would normally occur on open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered in the same way as agricultural and forestry property to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights.

Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Chimney Fires

These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.

Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Wildfires

A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by four or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for six hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.

Special Service Incidents (other emergency incidents)

These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:

- Local emergencies e.g. flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc.
- Major disasters.
- Domestic incidents e.g. water leaks, persons locked in or out etc.
- prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.

Fire Deaths (fire related)

This is where a person whose death is attributed to a fire even if the death occurred weeks or months later. There are also occasional cases where it becomes apparent subsequently that the fire was not the cause of the death. These figures are therefore subject to revision.

Fire Injuries

For consistency after April 2009 across the UK, fire casualties are recorded under four categories of severity:

- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious.
- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight.
- The victim was given first aid at the scene only, but required no further treatment.
- A precautionary check was recommended – the person was sent to hospital or was advised to see a doctor as a precaution, but having no obvious injury or distress.

False Alarm (general guidance)

Where the Fire and Rescue Service attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.

Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having attended and does not need to be reported.

Malicious

These are calls made with the intention of getting the Fire and Rescue Service to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

Good Intent

These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the Fire and Rescue Service really would attend a fire or special service incident.

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)

These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm equipment or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the Fire and Rescue Service as part of a standing arrangement, with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.

Have your say

We are always looking for ways to improve our service and to present information that is meaningful. In order to help us to do this we want to ensure your views are considered when delivering our activities and keeping you informed. So, if you have any comments about this assessment, or how we might improve our future annual performance assessments, we would very much like to hear from you.

Other versions of this document are available

- In paper and electronic formats.
- In Welsh and English.
- In accessible formats through our website.

Write to us	North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters Ffordd Salesbury St Asaph Business Park St Asaph Denbighshire LL17 0JJ
Call us	01745 535 250
Send us an email	Corporateplanning.helpdesk@northwalesfire.gov.wales
Visit our website	www.northwalesfire.gov.wales
Or follow us on	**X (previously Twitter):** @northwalesfire **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/northwalesfireservice **Instagram:** @northwalesfire

Please ring 999 only in an emergency

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 10**

Report to	**North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Anthony Jones – Assistant Chief Fire Officer**
Contact Officer	**Jonathan Blyde – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager**
Subject	**Annual Governance Statement 2025/26**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To present to Members of the authority the final Annual Governance Statement (AGS), as required by The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to demonstrate that:
- Business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations;
- Public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for; and
- Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people

3 The Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 is set out in Appendix 1 and has been prepared in accordance with the principles set out in the CIPFA/Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016). The forward work programme for 2026/27 is contained within the draft Annual Government Statement.

4 The Annual Governance Statement will be published as part of the production of the statutory financial statements for 2025/26. An assessment will be made by the external auditor to confirm whether it is consistent with the financial statements and has been produced in line with the Framework.

OBSERVATIONS FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

5 The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 was presented to the Audit Committee on 15th June 2026, where no observations were made.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6 It is recommended that Members:

i) Note the final Annual Governance Statement, and:
ii) Agree the proposed actions for 2026/27

BACKGROUND

7 Since 2010/11 all local government bodies have been required, by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to prepare an AGS which is published as part of the Statutory Accounts.

8 The purpose of the AGS is to assess and demonstrate that there is a sound system of corporate governance throughout the organisation.

INFORMATION

9 In 2016, CIPFA and Solace published a new governance framework, Developing Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (the Framework). The Framework is structured around seven principles of governance which enables the Authority to demonstrate its overall arrangements and set out how it has discharged its responsibilities.

10 The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to set out the Authority's arrangements to ensure that:

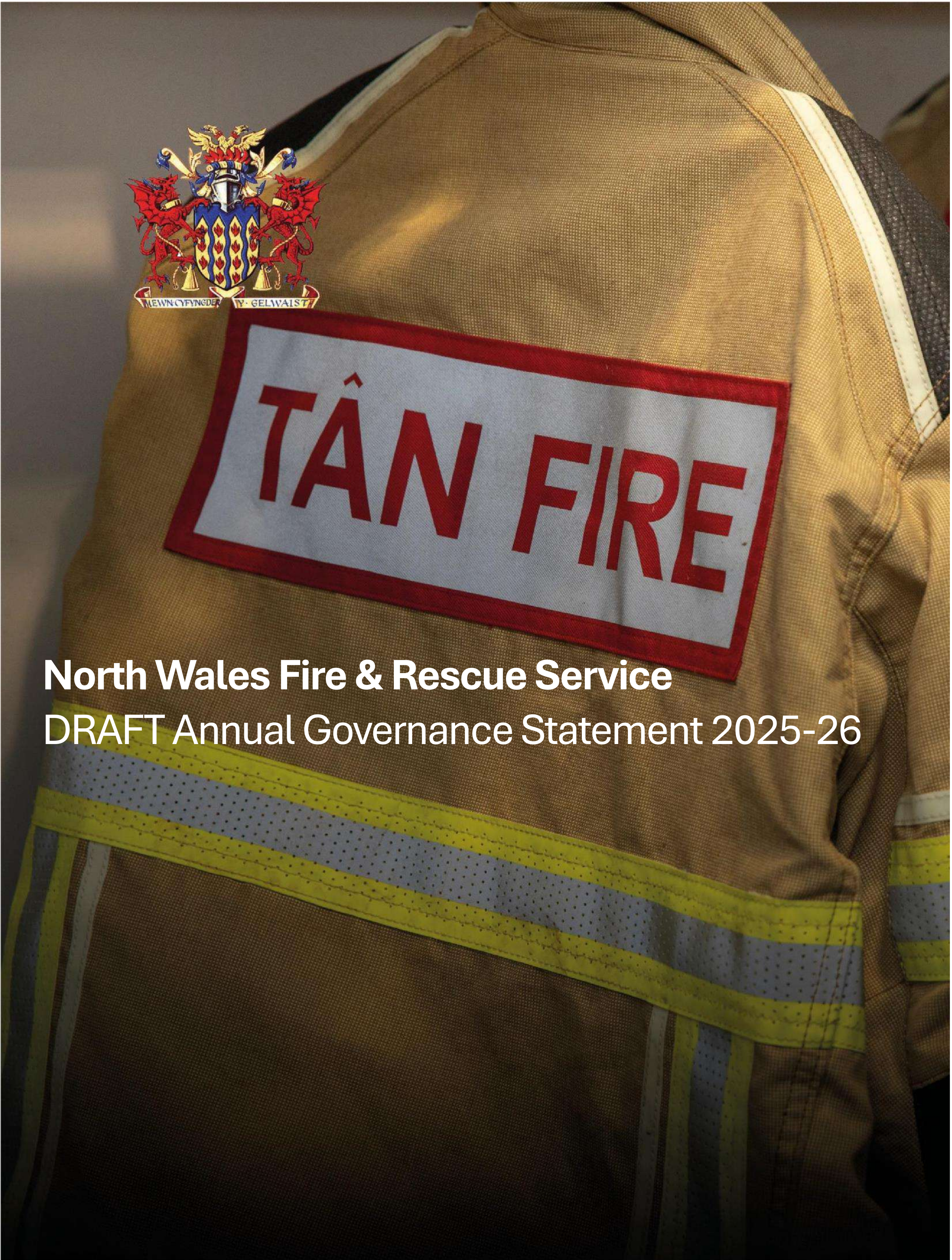
- business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.
- public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for; and
- resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people.

11 The Annual Governance Statement is reviewed by Audit Wales to confirm that it is consistent with its knowledge of the Authority and the financial statements.

12 Once published, performance against the forward work plan 2026/27 will monitored through the Service Leadership Teams' Performance Board on a quarterly basis.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This report links to NWFRA's long-term well-being objectives and demonstrates the governance arrangements in place to enable the Service to provide emergency responses and prevention work well in to the future.
Budget	Na
Legal	Preparation and submission of the Annual Governance Statement to the Auditor General, is in compliance with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014
Staffing	None
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Compliance with Equality Duty and Welsh Language Standards is explicitly referenced in the Statement.
Risks	A sound governance framework supports the Authority's risk management arrangements.



North Wales Fire & Rescue Service

DRAFT Annual Governance Statement 2025-26

ATAL AMDDIFFYN YMATEB
PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

For the year ending 31 March 2026

This Statement has been prepared in accordance with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework' 2016, including the 2025 Addendum on the Annual Review of Governance and the Annual Governance Statement.

The relationships between the seven principles for good governance in the public sector are illustrated below.

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (CIPFA and Solace, 2016)

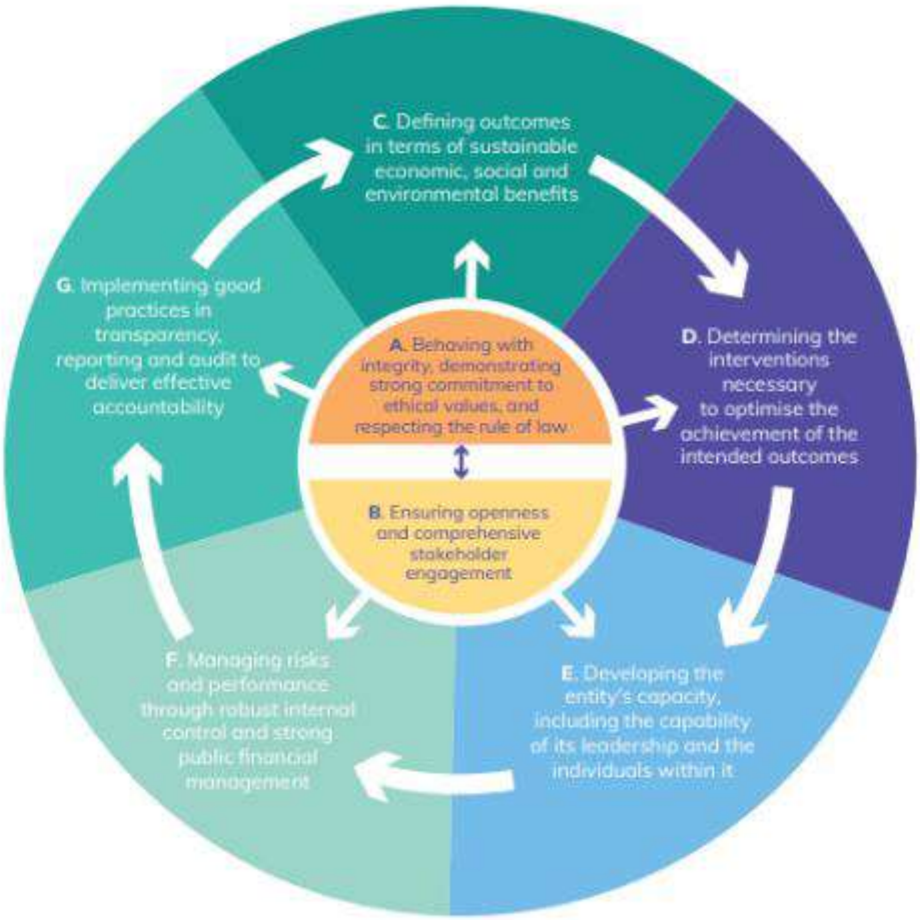


Fig. 1 How Principles for good governance relate to each other.

Source: international Framework-[Good Governance in the Public Sector]

This Annual Governance Statement explains how North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (The Authority) has complied with the framework and its seven core principles of good governance to ensure that resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and priorities.

Scope of Responsibility

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for ensuring that:

- business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations
- public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for
- resources are used economically, efficiently, effectively and equitably to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people.

In discharging its overall responsibility, Members and Senior Officers are responsible for putting in place appropriate arrangements for the governance of the Authority's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Strategic leadership is given by and discharged through the Authority and its various Committees, panels and working groups, which enable Members to decide on issues affecting the running of the Authority, in accordance with the principles of openness and democratic accountability.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

To fulfil its wide range of functions, the Authority must satisfy political, economic, social and environmental objectives over the short, medium and longer term. This subjects it to a different set of external and internal constraints and incentives from those found in the private sector, all of which affect its governance arrangements.

A key piece of legislation in Wales is the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires the Authority to consider the longer term in making its decisions and to work collaboratively with other public bodies to improve well-being in Wales.

Stakeholders are, therefore, interested in issues such as:

- whether the Authority's planned outputs have been delivered and outcomes achieved, and
- whether this has been done in an efficient, economic, effective and equitable manner.

To deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector organisations must try to achieve their objectives while acting in the public interest at all times, which implies primary consideration of the benefits for society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders.

This Statement gives assurances that North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority has complied with the governance framework for the year ended 31st March 2026.

The Governance Framework

North Wales Fire Authority currently comprises 28 elected councillors from the six unitary authorities of North Wales, with the number of representatives determined by the population of the area. More information about the Authority, its members and responsibilities can be found here.

The Authority is required to review the effectiveness of its arrangements each year to ensure that there is a sound system of governance. The key contributors to this process include:

Having an Authority and committee structure that:

- monitors the effectiveness of risk management arrangements
- regularly reviews the governance arrangements
- considers and reviews internal and external audit strategies, plans and reports
- reviews, scrutinises and approves the annual statement of accounts.

Having an Executive Panel that:

- provides leadership on governance
- contributes to the completion and review of the Annual Governance Statement
- provides clear direction to the Service and senior managers.

The use of information from various sources to inform the governance arrangements, for example:

- improvement and performance board reports
- risk management arrangements
- external regulator reports
- internal audit reports

The Authority's normal schedule of meetings are attended remotely. The full Fire and Rescue Authority meetings are webcast in Welsh and English simultaneously. All meetings are made available to the public to observe, should they make a request to do so.

The Authority recognises the Welsh Government's Written Statement on the Governance of Fire and Rescue Services, which signals potential future changes to governance arrangements across Wales. While these proposals are not yet embedded within the Service, the Authority is taking them into account as part of its ongoing assessment of governance effectiveness and future readiness.

Early in 2023, the Authority established two working-groups to support the development of two key organisational priorities:

- The Emergency Cover Review Working Group, which has now been superseded by a Collective Agreement Task and Finish Group with Trade Union representation but no longer any Fire Authority representation.
- The new Training and Development Centre Working Group.

In addition, a member of the Fire and Rescue Authority sits on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee as a member champion, and following the report of the CREST cultural review report, the Chief Fire Officer now chairs a Cultural Board to manage the implementation of the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan, which is published on the Fire Authority website, 06i-strategic-cultural-improvement-plan.pdf

During 2025-26, the Authority developed its third Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP 2026/27), approved April 2026, to deliver against the objectives outlined in the five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-2029

A Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) aims to identify risks facing the community and describes how the Fire and Rescue Authority will manage those risks and continue to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies.

The Authority has developed five principles for keeping communities safe and the CRMP;

- Acknowledges the requirements of key legislation
- Considers the ongoing work of the Public Services Boards
- Identifies the risks facing our communities
- Outlines what activity the Authority had taken to address these risks
- Explains what actions the Authority will take over the next five years to mitigate those risks
- Aligns with the Authority's revenue budget, capital plan and medium term financial plan.
  -
  - Fig 2. Committees of the Fire and Rescue Authority

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service – Assurance Reporting Diagram

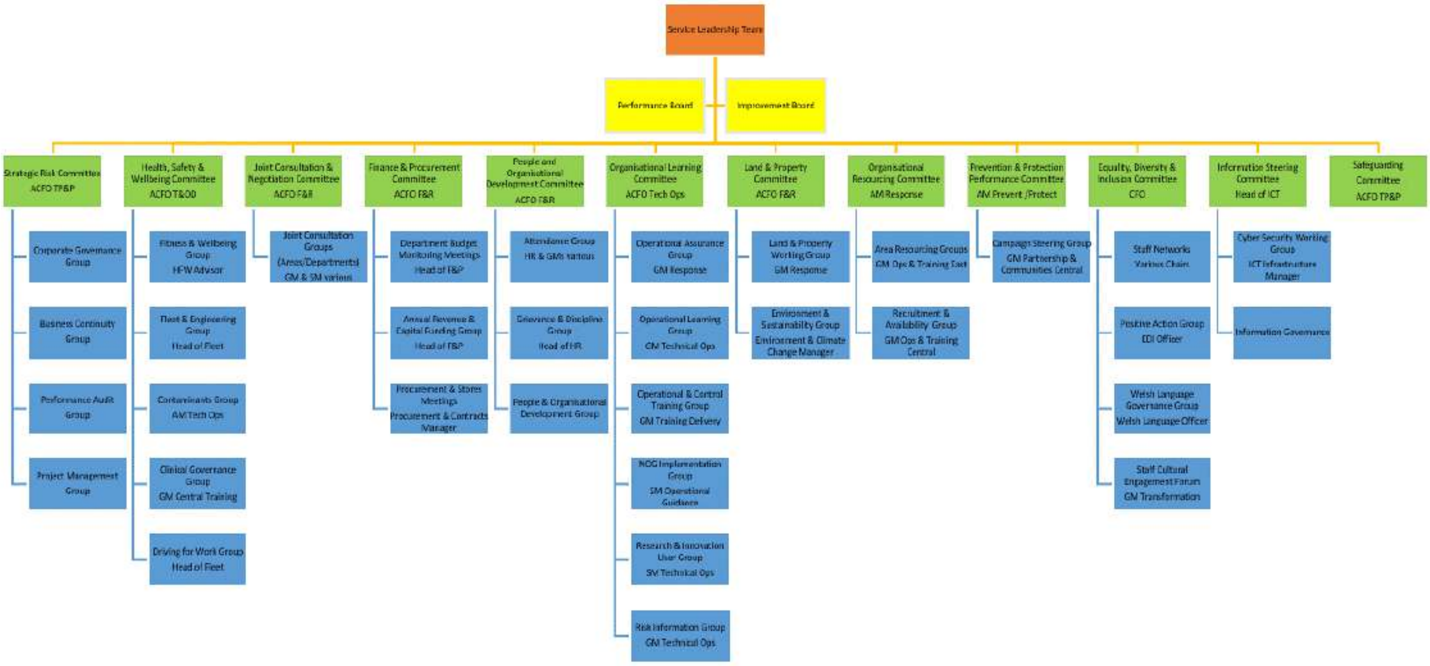


Fig 2. Committees of the Fire and Rescue Authority

The Authority has delegated responsibility for the day to day operation of the Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) to the Chief Fire Officer.

The Chief Fire Officer is supported by The Executive Group comprising the Principal Officers, (Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers) which is responsible for strategic leadership.

The Service Leadership Team (SLT), includes the Principal Officers, Area Managers and Heads of Department. It meets as a Performance Board to scrutinise performance, and as an Improvement Board to provide challenge and senior oversight of programmes, projects and policies. The SLT provides organisational leadership and service delivery.

The Service Governance and Assurance Structure of committees and groups, reporting to SLT, are embedded across the organisation, demonstrating robust governance across reporting, monitoring, scrutiny and decision making within all areas of the organisation. During 2025–26, the effectiveness of the existing governance structure was reviewed and enhancements were identified to further strengthen oversight, clarity of accountability and assurance across the organisation.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Chief Fire Officer

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

3 Assistant Chief Fire Officers

Assistant Chief Officer

Service Leadership Team
4 Area Managers and **6** Heads of Department

Fig 3. Service Leadership Team

Key Contributors to Developing and Maintaining the Governance Framework

Constitution	The purpose of the Constitution is to set out in clear language how the Fire Authority works and how it makes decisions
Fire Authority	Provides strategic leadership, democratic accountability and corporate challenge in relation to the provision of fire and rescue services across North Wales, encouraging public participation and conducting its affairs in an open and transparent manner. It agrees the Improvement and Wellbeing Plan, and the revenue and capital budgets.
Executive Panel	Monitors the performance of the Service and makes recommendations to the Authority on its key policies including the Improvement and Wellbeing Plan. The Panel reviews the strategic risk register.
Audit Committee	Provides independent review of the governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting, including the Treasury Management Strategy and annual accounts.
Standards Committee	Promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by Members of the Authority and oversees the whistle-blowing policy for complaints against Members of the Authority. Also, where statute permits, to receive reports and complaints about Members and to conduct or oversee investigations and make recommendations to the Authority.
Fire Authority Working Groups	Undertake detailed work associated with the Authority's planning and budget-setting process. It submits its observations to the Executive Panel which in turn makes recommendations for improvement/risk reduction/well-being objectives to the Authority.

Service Leadership Team	Sets and leads the implementation of the governance standards across the Service. Receives the annual improvement plan and feeds into the annual self-assessment.
Section 151 Officer	Ensures lawful and financially prudent decision making. Administration of financial affairs. Accountable for developing and maintaining the Fire Authority's governance, risk and control framework. Contributes to the effective corporate management and governance of the Fire Authority
Monitoring Officer	Reports on contraventions of any enactment or rule of law. Reports on any maladministration or injustice where the Local Government Ombudsman has carried out an investigation. Maintains and updates the Constitution. Maintains registers of member interests and gifts and hospitality. Advises Members on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct.
Internal Audit	Provides independent assurance and annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Fire Authority's governance, risk management and control framework. Delivers an annual programme of risk-based audit activity, including counter fraud and investigation activity. Makes recommendations for improvements in the management of risk.
External Audit	Provides independent assurance to the Fire Authority on financial reporting, governance arrangements and the use of resources, including an opinion on the annual statement of accounts and value for money conclusion. Undertakes statutory audit activity in accordance with the Auditor General for Wales' Code of Audit Practice, including consideration of the Service's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Identifies and reports significant governance, financial or value for money issues, and makes recommendations to support improvement and accountability.

CIPFA Principles - Governance Assurance

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

The Authority's Missions and Values are published within the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and on the Authority's website, providing a shared framework that underpins decision-making, behaviour and organisational culture.

These values are supported by a robust constitutional framework. The Authority's Constitution sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Fire and Rescue Authority, its Committees and Officers, including the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. Compliance with the Constitution is supported by the Monitoring Officer, who provides assurance that decisions are taken appropriately, and legally. Where required, legal advice is sought to inform decision-making and manage legal risk. The Constitution also incorporates the Code of Conduct for Members, which is monitored by the Standards Committee, reinforcing ethical leadership and accountability.

In order to support transparency and prevent conflicts of interest, the declaration of personal and business interests and the recording of gifts and hospitality if required. Registers are maintained and published on the Authority's website as part of each Member's personal profile, enabling public oversight and accountability.

Ethical governance is further reinforced through policies. These include the Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules. Where concerns or irregularities are identified, clear arrangements are in place to ensure that matters are investigated thoroughly and appropriately. The availability of Safecall, an independent, confidential reporting service operating 24/7, supports a culture in which concerns can be raised safely, including anonymously where appropriate.

Alongside formal controls, the Authority seeks to embed ethical values through its people management arrangements. Recruitment, induction and training processes emphasise expected behaviours and alignment with core values.

Equality, diversity and inclusion form a key part of the Authority's ethical framework. Governance oversight is provided through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Committee, established in 2022, and through a published five year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029 . Implementation of the Strategy is guided by a detailed annual action plan which is performance managed and reviewed quarterly, and incorporates new EHCR monitoring, providing assurance that equality considerations are embedded into governance and decision making.

The Service also maintains robust arrangements to uphold professional standards and address misconduct. Disciplinary cases and allegations of wrongdoing are managed in accordance with the Service's Discipline policy and procedures, with two dedicated Discipline and Grievance Officers ensuring matters are dealt with promptly, consistently and professionally.

The Authority recognises its responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language as an integral part of ethical and lawful service delivery. Compliance with Welsh Language Standards is demonstrated through the publication of the Welsh Language Standards Monitoring report 2024-25 on the Authority's website. In addition, workforce capability is supported by requirements for all new employees to achieve a minimum of Level 2 Welsh language skills, progressing to Level 3 upon promotion.

Setting and delivering lawful, ethical objectives is supported through the Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29, which sets out the Authority's

Improvement Objectives and Well-being Objectives. The Plan has been subject to public and stakeholder consultation, with the ratified five-year Plan and the 2026-27 Implementation Plan published on the Authority's website. These arrangements ensure compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Alignment with the Well-being of Future Generations Act is further reflected across departmental plans and policies where applicable.

Safeguarding responsibilities are addressed through clear policies and procedures to ensure that vulnerable individuals encountered by the Service are referred appropriately to partner agencies. These arrangements are overseen by a dedicated Safeguarding Manager, providing specialist oversight and assurance.

The Authority has also adopted the Social Partnership Duty, building upon established arrangements with recognised staff representative bodies to support engagement on objectives and strategic decisions. The first Social Partnership Duty Annual Report was approved for publication and submission to the Social Partnership Council in April 2025, providing external assurance of compliance with statutory requirements.

Following the publication of the independent Crest Advisory cultural review in January 2025, the Authority further strengthened its governance arrangements through the establishment of a Culture Board and the appointment of dedicated culture champions. These arrangements support oversight and delivery of agreed cultural improvement actions.

The Authority also recognises the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, including its recommendations in relation to leadership and organisational culture, and these considerations continue to inform the Authority's ongoing governance and assurance framework.

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

The Authority is committed to openness, transparency and meaningful engagement as a core part of its governance framework. Authority and Committee meetings are publicly advertised, with agendas and supporting papers published on the Authority's website. Full Authority meetings are webcast, enabling public access to decision-making and scrutiny.

Transparency is further supported through the Authority's Publication Scheme, with information published on the website. Documents are made available in Welsh and English, with Read/Speak versions provided where appropriate to support accessibility and inclusion.

Engagement with stakeholders is embedded within decision-making processes, particularly where significant change is proposed. Public consultation arrangements are in place to invite views prior to the development and implementation of key changes. This included consultation on the objectives contained within the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27, which took place between October and December 2025. Consultation responses were reviewed in line with the Gunning Principles to ensure that engagement was meaningful, fair and transparent. A report summarising the feedback received and explaining how it informed the final plan was presented to the Authority. A full Equality Impact Assessment was also completed and, alongside the consultation findings, considered by the Authority prior to approval of the plan.

The Authority has previously been recognised as achieving 'Good Practice' by the Consultation Institute, including for public consultation undertaken in connection with the ongoing Emergency Cover Review. This provides independent assurance regarding the quality and robustness of engagement arrangements.

Openness and engagement are also supported through a wider range of governance and communication arrangements. These include:

- the completion of impact assessments for key decisions,
- a Complaints and Compliments Procedure that provides clear escalation routes for significant matters for external complainants, and a grievance policy and procedure for internal complaints.
- a Public Engagement and Consultation Strategy that guides consistent practice.

The Authority also engages with recognised Employee Representative Bodies through both informal arrangements and formal structures, including the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee, with these arrangements further strengthened through the adoption of the Social Partnership Duty.

Regular engagement with staff is also supported through a biennial 'Fire Family' staff survey. In addition, the Authority participates in a range of external networks and forums, including the Welsh Local Government Association, North Wales Equality Leads Forum, Race Council Cymru and the North Wales Inter-Faith Forum.

A broad and inclusive range of engagement methods is used to reach communities, staff and stakeholders. These include directed communications through corporate social media channels, including Facebook and X, alongside locally-managed fire station accounts to support engagement within communities. Stakeholders are able to sign up for email updates on specific issues via the Authority's website. Engagement with children and young people is supported through programmes such as Phoenix, Fire Cadets and school visits, alongside wider community safety engagement with householders and businesses.

Targeted engagement also supports inclusive recruitment and prevention activity. This includes activity coordinated through a Positive Action Group, chaired by the Organisational Development Manager, as well as attendance at open days and community events, such as the Eisteddfod and fire station-led events.

Internal communication is supported through the Weekly Brief electronic newsletter to staff, while external communication campaigns are led by Community Safety Managers.

Through Prevention and Recruitment activities, the Service engages with people of all ages and from diverse backgrounds.

The Authority also recognises the importance of partnership working in supporting openness, shared accountability and effective service delivery. Partnership arrangements are in place across a range of local, regional and national forums, including the All-Wales Joint Emergency Services Group, Local Resilience Forums, the three local Public Services Boards, the Regional Partnership Board, the Strategic Arson Reduction Board, and Local Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards, alongside collaboration with other emergency services.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises the importance of effective collaboration and clear accountability. These principles continue to underpin the Authority's governance framework, engagement arrangements and partnership working.

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.

The Authority defines its strategic outcomes through a clear and long-term planning framework. The five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) sets the strategic direction for the Service and identifies Improvement Objectives in line with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, alongside Well-being Objectives in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Together, these objectives provide a clear statement of the intended economic, social and environmental outcomes to be achieved.

The Authority's policies and decision-making arrangements reflect the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, ensuring that long-term impacts, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement are considered when setting priorities and determining how services are delivered. All relevant strategies, plans and policies demonstrate alignment with this approach.

In defining and delivering its outcomes, the Authority also has regard to its environmental responsibilities under wider Welsh legislation, including the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. These duties are reflected within governance, planning and assurance arrangements, supporting sustainable management of resources and environmental stewardship.

Financial sustainability underpins the Authority's ability to deliver long-term outcomes. During the year, the Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) was reviewed and updated for the period 2026–30, supporting long-term financial planning and informing decision-making as part of the Authority's governance and assurance framework. The MTRS, which includes a ten-year Capital Plan, alongside the annual budget-setting process, aims to ensure that financial resources are aligned with the Authority's priorities and intended outcomes.

The Authority also recognises that sustainable outcomes rely on social responsibility, fairness and workforce wellbeing. Mandatory eLearning in relation to the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act continues to be completed by all staff. As a Disability Confident employer, the Service is committed to the recruitment and retention of disabled people and those with health conditions, and it has signed the Armed Forces Covenant supported by an Armed Forces Reserves and Veterans Policy, to ensure fair treatment for those who serve or have served in the armed forces and their families. In addition, the Service pays above the real living wage, supporting fair pay and workforce stability.

Safeguarding arrangements form a further element of the Authority's commitment to social sustainability. Clear safeguarding policies and procedures are in place to ensure that vulnerable people encountered by the Service are referred appropriately to partner agencies. Workforce and public protection is further supported through robust criminal records checking arrangements. Following changes to legislation, Fire and Rescue Authorities are listed in Schedule 1 to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions), enabling all employees to be subject to a minimum of a Standard level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, renewed on a three-year cycle.

To further strengthen Safeguarding arrangements, the authority has implemented an anti-sexual harassment policy, and risk assessments have been conducted for every department. These are monitored by the Safeguarding Manager, working with the HR department.

The Authority also maintains business continuity arrangements to support organisational resilience and service continuity. As part of its statutory duties, business continuity plans are in place across the Service and are reviewed regularly. Ongoing collaboration with the National Fire Chiefs Council supports continuous improvement in planning and consideration of emerging and evolving risks.

To ensure that intended outcomes are assessed holistically, key decisions are supported by an integrated impact assessment. This considers equality, data protection, health, safety and wellbeing, Welsh language, finance, sustainability and workforce implications, alongside the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the socio-economic duty and anticipated statutory health duties.

Environmental sustainability is further strengthened through the Authority's Environmental Strategy, which sets out clear and measurable performance targets to reduce carbon emissions and other significant environmental impacts. Progress is monitored through governance arrangements, and the Authority reports on its biodiversity duties through regular Biodiversity Reports, providing transparency and assurance on how environmental considerations are addressed within planning and decision-making.

Sustainability considerations are embedded within the Authority's wider governance framework, including the Contract Procedure Rules, which require consideration of social, economic and environmental benefits when undertaking relevant procurement activity, supporting value for money and wider community outcomes.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises the importance of strengthening organisational capability and supporting sustainability and net-zero objectives. These considerations are fully integrated into the Authority's governance, strategic planning and resource allocation arrangements, ensuring that outcomes remain sustainable for current and future generations.

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

The Authority uses a combination of consultation, performance management, risk management and governance oversight to ensure that interventions are timely, proportionate and aligned to the achievement of its intended outcomes. Public consultation is undertaken as part of setting the Authority's objectives, including those contained within the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan. This ensures that objectives are informed by stakeholder views and community need before they are finalised and delivered.

Progress against annual objectives is monitored and assessed throughout the year, with a formal assessment of performance published each October. This provides transparency and enables the Authority to evaluate whether outcomes are being achieved or whether further intervention is required.

Risk management forms a core element of the Authority's approach to determining and prioritising intervention. The Strategic Risk Management

Policy sets out the process for identifying and managing risks that may affect the delivery of objectives or activities. Strategic risks are reviewed throughout the year via the Strategic Risk Committee, ensuring that emerging and changing risks are identified, mitigated and escalated appropriately. These arrangements are subject to internal scrutiny and external audit, providing assurance over their effectiveness.

Performance and financial information is subject to structured scrutiny through the Authority's governance arrangements. Following consideration by the Executive Group, performance and financial reports are presented to the Authority and its Committees. A quarterly Performance Monitoring Report is prepared for the Executive Panel, while more detailed operational scrutiny takes place through the Performance Board, where the Service Leadership Team reviews data relating to incident demand, emerging trends and resource availability. These arrangements ensure that issues are identified promptly and that appropriate corrective or mitigating actions are agreed.

Effective intervention is also supported through robust financial governance. Budget planning processes involve Service leads and Authority Members and are designed to align resources with risk-based objectives, while balancing the ongoing costs associated with maintaining estates, vehicles and equipment. The Budget, Monitoring and Procurement Committee provides strategic oversight and governance of these arrangements.

Operational learning and risk mitigation are overseen through the Organisational Learning Committee, which provides governance oversight of National Operational Guidance, National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning. The Committee also oversees the collection and management of Site-Specific Risk Information and monitors activity relating to emerging risks, including work addressing the risk of fire from new technologies through the Battery Energy Storage System (Lithium-Ion) working group.

Recognising the scale and complexity of a number of significant change initiatives, the Service reviewed its approach to programme and project management during the year and identified the need to strengthen Programme and Project Management Office (PMO) arrangements. Plans have been put in place to further develop PMO capability during 2026–27, improving oversight, coordination, reporting and risk management for significant programmes and projects. This includes governance arrangements supporting work such as the review of emergency cover arrangements across North Wales, the review of rota systems, and major system implementation and migration projects.

Health, safety and wellbeing considerations also inform intervention and assurance arrangements. Health and safety incidents are reported, reviewed and monitored to ensure that risks to staff are identified and mitigated, with strategic oversight provided by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.

In addition, the Authority monitors delivery against shared national commitments. The All Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter sets out seven high-level commitments relating to the prevention of and response to dwelling fires, with performance reported annually as part of the Authority's Annual Performance Assessment.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises the importance of robust arrangements for identifying, evaluating and responding to risk. Risk management and performance oversight therefore continue to be central to the Authority's governance and decision-making framework, supporting effective intervention and the delivery of intended outcomes.

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.

The Authority recognises that effective governance depends on clear leadership, organisational capacity and a skilled workforce. The Authority's Constitution defines the respective roles of elected Members and designated Officers, providing clarity around responsibilities, accountability and objectives. Designated statutory posts include the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer, ensuring appropriate professional leadership and statutory oversight.

Organisational capacity is further strengthened through regional and national collaboration. The three Welsh fire and rescue services participate in a range of joint arrangements, including the All-Wales Fire Investigation Training Forum, supporting shared learning, professional standards and a consistent approach across Wales.

The Authority has written and implemented the All-Wales FRS People and Organisational Development Strategy 2025–2028, which provides a strategic framework for workforce development and underpins the Authority's commitment to lifelong learning, professional competence and organisational resilience. This strategic approach to people development is complemented by the Authority's recognition of apprenticeship schemes as an important mechanism for building future capacity and capability. During 2025–26, apprentices were recruited into both firefighter and non-operational roles, supporting workforce sustainability, skills development and talent pathways across the organisation.

In recognition of the scale and complexity of longer-term transformation programmes, including the development of firefighter training facilities, the Service has established dedicated project management capacity. This supports effective delivery, governance oversight and organisational learning in relation to significant programmes of change.

Foundational capability is supported through structured induction arrangements for both Members and employees. Induction processes introduce the organisation's core values, expected standards of conduct and role requirements, ensuring a consistent understanding of responsibilities from the outset.

The Authority also recognises the importance of maintaining workforce health and wellbeing as a key element of organisational capacity. Health and wellbeing support is provided through a range of measures, including HR policies and guidance, flexible working arrangements, access to occupational health services and an employee assistance programme. Strategic oversight of these arrangements is provided by People and Organisational Development Committee and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.

Learning, training and professional competence are supported by a dedicated training department and established competency frameworks for operational staff. Training is delivered through a range of methods, including mandatory e-learning modules for key subject areas such as data protection. Governance oversight of learning and development arrangements is provided by the Organisational Learning Committee, ensuring alignment with national guidance and identified organisational risks.

During the year, the Authority approved a new three-year Training Strategy, which supports the continued development of workforce capability, leadership capacity and organisational competence as part of the Authority's governance and assurance framework. In addition, during 2025–26, the Authority continued to invest in leadership development at all levels of the organisation, with staff participating in nationally recognised supervisory, middle-management and senior leadership programmes. This investment supports leadership capability, management competence and organisational resilience.

Operational leadership capability has also been strengthened through continued development of incident command skills. Staff undertook Gold, Silver and Bronze incident command training, supporting effective leadership, command resilience and safe decision-making at incidents. More broadly, the development needs of employees are identified through an appraisal process, and organisational development is identified through an annual Training Needs Analysis process. The Service delivers structured training aligned to Incident Command Levels 1–4 to support confident, effective command in both operational and strategic contexts.

Professional standards are reinforced through membership of relevant professional bodies and the requirement for ongoing continuing professional development. Promotional processes are aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Leadership Framework, supporting consistency, fairness and alignment with national expectations.

The Authority also recognises the value of independent assurance and professional advice in strengthening organisational capability. During 2025–26, this included assurance and advisory support provided by the Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) to inform improvement activity and support effective governance.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises that effective people management, leadership development and a positive organisational culture are fundamental to good governance. These principles continue to underpin the Authority's approach to workforce planning, learning and organisational development.

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

The Authority maintains a comprehensive framework of internal control and assurance to support effective risk management, financial stewardship and decision-making. Statutory responsibility for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs rests with the Treasurer, in accordance with Section 151 Local Government Finance Act 1972, while the Monitoring Officer provides assurance that the Authority operates within the law and complies with established policies, procedures and regulatory requirements.

The Strategic Risk Management Policy sets out a structured approach to identifying, assessing and managing risks that may impact on the achievement of objectives. A corporate risk register is maintained by the Corporate Planning Department and reviewed throughout the year by the Strategic Risk Committee to ensure that risks are appropriately monitored, mitigated and escalated where necessary.

Decision-making is supported by comprehensive reporting and assurance arrangements. Reports presented to the Authority and its Committees are accompanied by an integrated impact assessment, enabling Members to consider legal, financial, equality, wellbeing, sustainability and operational implications when making decisions. Business continuity arrangements are also in place to ensure that critical services can continue to be delivered in the event of disruption. These arrangements are reviewed annually to maintain organisational resilience.

Independent scrutiny and assurance form a central part of the Authority's internal control framework. The Audit Committee provides oversight of governance, risk management and internal control arrangements, ensuring that recommendations for improvement arising from Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other external regulators or inspection are considered, agreed and monitored to completion. Members and senior management are also provided with quarterly reports on service improvement and performance against key performance indicators and milestones, supporting transparency and continuous improvement.

Arrangements are in place to maintain registers of Members' personal and business interests and a register of gifts and hospitality. These are published on the Authority's website as part of each Member's personal profile. Policies covering Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing further reinforce the Authority's commitment to operating in a fair, open and transparent manner. The Authority's Contract Procedure Rules form a key component of the internal control framework and support lawful, transparent and accountable procurement activity. During the year, further work was undertaken to strengthen compliance with procurement requirements and to embed fair working and partnership principles, including alignment with the Social Partnership Duty, as part of the Authority's wider governance and assurance arrangements.

Information governance arrangements support the secure and lawful handling of data. Policies in place include the Data Protection Policy, Freedom of Information Policy, Data Retention Policy and Communications and Information Security Policy. These arrangements are supported by staff training, including mandatory data protection e-learning for all employees, and by formally agreed information-sharing protocols with partner organisations.

Financial management arrangements support both the delivery of services and the implementation of transformational change, while ensuring sound stewardship of public resources. A financial update is presented at each Authority meeting, with reports made publicly available on the Authority's website to support transparency.

Internal Audit services are provided by the Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), which delivers a programme of risk-based audit activity approved by the Audit Committee. The outcomes of Internal Audit work undertaken during 2025–26, including audits relating to asset management, have informed the Authority's assessment of the effectiveness of its governance, risk management and internal control arrangements. The Head of Internal Audit provides an annual independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements, which is a key source of assurance for the Authority. For the financial year 2025-26, the Head of Internal Audit opinion statement determined that "Substantial assurance can be given that there is a good system of internal control designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently". A full copy of the Head of Internal Audit's opinion will be published on the Authority's website.

External assurance is provided by Audit Wales through a programme of financial and performance audit activity. This includes the audit of the Authority's Statements of Accounts, work relating to compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, reviews undertaken under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and assessment of the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The findings from this work are reported to Members and inform the Authority's ongoing governance, performance and improvement arrangements. Treasury Management arrangements are operated in accordance with professional practice and are subject to annual Member review. The Authority's Statements of Accounts and performance against key areas of risk and priority are subject to independent external audit and scrutiny.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises the importance of effective processes for identifying and evaluating risk. Risk management therefore continues to be a central element of the Authority's governance, internal control and assurance arrangements.

During 2025-26, Audit Wales also completed a review of the Authority's financial sustainability arrangements. The review recognised that the Authority had a clear understanding of its financial position and a relatively strong reserves position, whilst identifying opportunities to further strengthen medium and longer-term financial planning, the strategic use of reserves, financial reporting to Members, and clarity of financial oversight arrangements. The Authority has considered the findings and recommendations arising from this review and incorporated appropriate actions within its ongoing governance and improvement planning arrangements

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The Authority is committed to transparency, effective scrutiny and continuous improvement, supported by robust reporting and assurance arrangements. As part of this commitment, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, working jointly with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, appointed Crest Advisory to undertake an independent cultural review. This followed the Welsh Government's acceptance, in March 2024, of a proposal from both Services to better understand progress in improving organisational culture.

The proposal formed the basis of a written statement by the then Deputy Minister for Social Partnership, Hannah Blythyn MS.

Crest Advisory conducted the review and published its findings report in February 2025, identifying 32 recommendations to support cultural improvement. In response, and throughout 2025–26, the Authority strengthened its governance and assurance arrangements through the establishment of a dedicated Culture Board. Chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, the Board brings together Authority Members, senior officers, culture champions and external representation from Welsh Government. The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead are members of the Board. These arrangements provide structured scrutiny, external challenge and assurance over the delivery of agreed cultural improvement actions. A strategic improvement plan has been developed and published, setting out how the recommendations will be implemented and monitored.

More broadly, the Authority, with the support of the Monitoring Officer, undertakes regular review of the adequacy and effectiveness of its governance arrangements and internal control environment. Fire and Rescue Authority meetings are held in public, with agendas and minutes published on the Authority's website. Full Authority meetings are webcast, supporting openness and public access to decision-making and scrutiny. Reports presented to the Authority follow a structured format, ensuring that key information is presented clearly and consistently to support informed decision-making.

The Authority complies with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, publishing information in accordance with its publication scheme and responding appropriately to requests from members of the public. Transparency of planning and performance is further supported through publication of the Community Risk Management Plan, which sets out the Authority's Improvement and Well-being Objectives and is subject to review by Audit Wales in connection with the issue of a Certificate of Compliance.

Financial transparency and accountability are supported through the timely production and publication of the Annual Statement of Accounts. The accounts are presented in a clear, user-friendly format, providing transparent information on income, expenditure and the stewardship of public funds, and are submitted for audit in line with statutory deadlines. The Authority also publishes an Annual Pay Policy Statement in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and Members' salaries are paid and reported in line with determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

Arrangements are in place to ensure transparency in relation to interests and relationships. Members and senior officers are required to declare relevant interests in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK. These declarations support the identification and disclosure of related party transactions where required.

The Authority provides external transparency through regular reporting to Welsh Government. Reports are submitted each January and July detailing matters relating to discipline, grievance and external complaints, including cases of alleged misconduct or gross misconduct where behaviours may raise concerns about organisational culture and values.

The Annual Governance Statement itself plays a key role in accountability, providing a transparent account of the Authority's governance arrangements, the review of governance effectiveness and planned governance improvement actions for the year ahead.

Independent assurance is provided through both external and internal audit. The Auditor General for Wales, appointed by statute, provides an opinion on the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which is published on the Authority's website. The Authority responds to audit recommendations and takes corrective action where required. Internal Audit operates on a risk-based approach, providing assurance that key risks and controls are being effectively managed. Following a review of internal arrangements, a new Internal Audit provider was appointed in June 2023 to further strengthen assurance arrangements. Processes are also in place to ensure that recommendations arising from inspection and regulatory bodies are tracked and implemented.

In line with the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, the Authority recognises the importance of strong accountability, effective collaboration and robust scrutiny. These principles continue to underpin the Authority's approach to transparency, reporting and assurance, supporting public confidence and good governance.

Conclusion

During the year, the Authority has reviewed the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in line with the principles set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government, including the requirements and expectations set out in the May 2025 addendum. This review has considered the operation of the Authority's governance framework, risk management and internal control arrangements, alongside assurance derived from internal and external audit, performance reporting, regulatory activity and ministerial engagement.

The review has drawn on a wide range of sources of assurance, including the work of the Audit Committee, the outcomes of Internal Audit delivered by the Mersey Internal Audit Agency, external assurance provided by Audit Wales, performance and risk reporting to Members, and findings arising from independent reviews, including the Crest Advisory cultural review. Thei Authority has also taken account of compliance with statutory duties, including those relating to finance, governance, consultation, equality, Welsh language standards and social partnership.

Based on this review, the Authority has concluded that it has an effective framework of governance, risk management and internal control in place which is operating as intended and supporting the delivery of its objectives. The arrangements described within this Annual Governance Statement demonstrate that the Authority continues to behave with integrity, remains open and accountable, manages risk and performance appropriately, and provides effective leadership and oversight.

The review has also identified areas where governance arrangements could be further strengthened. In particular, during 2025–26 the Authority recognised the need to enhance governance and assurance arrangements in relation to organisational culture and the oversight of significant programmes and projects. In response, the Authority has taken proactive steps to strengthen arrangements, including the establishment of a Culture Board following the independent Crest Advisory review, and the planned further development of programme and project management governance during 2026–27.

The Authority is satisfied that these actions represent proportionate and appropriate responses and has set out clear improvement actions to further strengthen governance and assurance arrangements. These actions will be monitored through existing governance mechanisms, including the Service Leadership Team, the Audit Committee and the Authority itself, and progress will be reported as part of the Authority's ongoing performance and assurance framework.

Taking all of this into account, the Authority considers that the governance arrangements in place during the year were effective, and that appropriate plans are in place to address identified areas for improvement and to continue to enhance governance arrangements in line with good practice and national expectations.

How the Authority addressed its 2025/26 Governance Improvement Actions.

Governance Improvement Area	Planned Action	Forum	Responsibility	Progress as at April 2026
Efficacy of Prevention activities	Consider the findings and recommendations arising from Audit Wales review of Prevention.	Fire and Rescue Authority	Head of Prevention and Protection	During 2025-26, the Authority responded to the Audit Wales review of prevention activity by strengthening governance, oversight and assurance, and progressing a shift towards a more targeted, data-led and risk-informed prevention model, supported by enhanced performance reporting and national collaboration.
Setting of Wellbeing Objectives	Consider the findings and recommendations arising from Audit Wales review of well-being objective setting.	SLT Improvement Board	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	During 2025-26, the Authority strengthened its approach to setting well-being objectives by improving alignment with partner activity, enhancing involvement and equality considerations, and embedding objectives more clearly within corporate, financial and performance management frameworks. Further work will focus on making partnership contributions and outcome-based performance measures more explicit in future planning and reporting cycles.
Strategic Risk Management	Implement the recommendations from the Internal Audit review of Core Controls of Risk Management.	SLT Improvement Board	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	A revisit by Mersey Internal Audit Agency during 2025-26 found the Service made progress in strengthening its risk management framework, including approval of a Risk Management Strategy, clearer roles and responsibilities, enhanced training provision and improved governance arrangements. Further work is planned with a clear programme of actions in place, being progressed through established governance arrangements.

Organisational Culture	Respond to the recommendations of the CREST independent cultural review through staff and Fire and Rescue Authority engagement, culminating in the publication of an improvement plan.	Fire and Rescue Authority	Chief Fire Officer	During 2025-26, a Culture Action Plan was developed in response to the Crest Advisory review and is being implemented through strengthened governance, with progress subject to regular review and reporting via established internal and external oversight arrangements.
Efficacy of Response to Domestic Dwelling Fires	Respond to recommendations in the Chief Fire Advisor and Inspector for Wales' "Inspection of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to consider the effectiveness of its response to domestic dwelling fires".	Fire and Rescue Authority	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	During 2025/26, governance of all CFRAIW thematic reviews was strengthened through the establishment of a dedicated oversight group, with clear reporting lines, a consolidated action plan, and enhanced all-Wales collaboration to support consistent implementation and improvement.
Supplier verification and Anti-fraud guidance	Respond to recommendations by the Internal Auditor in relation to Key financial processing controls 2024/25 including	Finance and Procurement Committee	Head of Finance	Supplier verification procedures have been strengthened, including enhanced checks before supplier set-up and update. Anti-fraud guidance has been updated, with an e-learning package now live and communicated to relevant finance and procurement staff.

	implementing Supplier Verification, Anti-Fraud Guidance and Regular Reviews of Bank Mandates.			A programme of periodic reviews of supplier bank details has been introduced to reduce fraud risk. Bank mandate has been updated.

The Authority's Governance Improvement Actions 2026/27

Governance Improvement Area	Planned Action	Forum	Responsibility	For completion by
Alignment with emerging Welsh Government requirements	Prepare for potential future changes to Fire and Rescue Authority governance arrangements, aligned to emerging Welsh Government policy and guidance, including the Written Statement on the Governance of Fire and Rescue Services.	Fire and Rescue Authority	Chief Fire Officer and Clerk to the Fire Authority	31st March 2027
Implementation of Fire and Rescue national framework 2026	Prepare for potential changes arising from the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2026, ensuring governance, planning and assurance arrangements remain aligned with emerging requirements.	Fire and Rescue Authority	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	31st March 2027
National Inspection expectations	Maintain organisational readiness for potential inspection activity, including reviewing governance, performance management and assurance arrangements against emerging Welsh Government and national inspection expectations.	Fire and rescue Authority	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	31st March 2027
Contaminants	Prepare for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspection on contaminants, including reviewing and strengthening relevant controls, assurance and governance arrangements.	Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee	Head of Technical Operations	31st March 2027
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Strengthen governance and assurance arrangements for equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights, ensuring continued compliance with statutory duties and readiness for external scrutiny and inspection.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee	Chief Fire Officer	31st March 2027

Fire safety and Building Safety (Wales) act.	Prepare for and respond to changes in fire safety and building safety legislation, including the implementation of the Building Safety (Wales) Act, ensuring protection, governance and assurance arrangements remain effective and aligned.	Prevention, Protection and Performance Committee	Head of Prevention and Protection	31st March 2027
Project & Programme Management	To continue to strengthen governance, oversight and internal controls in relation to programme and project management, ensuring effective assurance, reporting and delivery of key change initiatives.	Strategic Risk Committee	Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	31st March 2027

Compliance with the Financial Management Code

The CIPFA Financial Management Code (CIPFA FM Code) is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist the Authority in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The CIPFA FM Code therefore sets the standards of financial management for the Authority.

The Code is based on a series of principles supported by specific standards and statements of practice which are considered necessary to provide the strong foundation to:

- Financially manage the short, medium- and long-term finances of the Authority
- Manage financial resilience to meet foreseen demands on services
- Financially manage unexpected shocks in their financial circumstances.

Each Authority must demonstrate that the requirements of the Code are being satisfied.

As Section 151 Officer I have the Statutory Responsibility (supported by the Service Leadership Team and Members of the Authority) for ensuring compliance with the CIPFA FM Code.

I have carried out a full assessment of compliance with the CIPFA FM Code as part of the annual review of the Annual Governance Statement and I can confirm that in my opinion the Authority is compliant with the code in the majority of areas.

Signed ______________________________ (Section 151 Officer) 2026

Governance Opinion and Conclusion

The Authority recognises that good governance provides the foundation for the delivery of good quality services that meet the needs of stakeholders and ensures that public money is well spent. This review confirms the governance systems and monitoring in place for 2025-26 and the steps taken to ensure that they are working effectively.

The Authority is satisfied that appropriate governance arrangements are in place and remains committed to enhancing these through the implementation of the action plan for 2026-27.

Signed ______________________________ (Authority Chair) 2026

Signed ______________________________ (Chief Fire Officer) 2026

Awdurdod Tân ac Achub Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 11**

Report to	**North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority – Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Anthony Jones – Assistant Chief Fire Officer**
Contact Officer	**Jonathan Blyde – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager**
Subject	**Performance Monitoring, April 2026 – June 2026**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Executive Panel with an update on performance for the period 1st April 2026 – 30th June 2026 (Quarter one 2026/27). The performance measures reflect the five key principles outlined in the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) for the 2026/27 financial-year and include commentary on emerging trends and future actions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. **Improved Attendance Amid Growing Workforce**
   i. Overall sickness absence cases reduced by 16.3% in Quarter one of 2026/27, while total staffing increased by 25 employees to 1,004 (From March 31st to June 30th).
   ii. The reduction in days lost to sickness absence achieved in Quarter four 2025/26 was maintained in Quarter one. Overall sickness absence remained below the levels recorded in the same period of 2025/26, demonstrating a sustained improvement in sickness absence management.

3. **Rising demand in Special Service Calls**
   413 Special Service Call incidents were attended in Quarter one of 2026/27, representing the highest volume of Special service calls attended during any April – June period during the last 10 years. This was predominantly due to an increase in requests to assist other agencies.

4. **High number of Accidental Dwelling Fires, with low number of Casualties**
   Quarter one of 2026/27 saw the highest number of ADFs recorded in a first Quarter over the past five years; however, casualty numbers were the lowest recorded for any first Quarter during that period.

5. **Prevention Activity showing increase in Risk Based Prioritisation**
   High-priority Safe and Well Checks that were completed increased from 1,265 (27%) in Quarter one of 2025/26 to 1,408 (39%) in Quarter one of 2026/27. This reflects the Service's continued focus on increasing the proportion of high-risk interventions.

OBSERVATIONS FROM SERVICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

6. Amendments to format and wording were suggested by the Leadership team. These have all been implemented to help provide clarity.

RECOMMENDATION

7. It is recommended that Members:

   i) Note the content of the Performance Monitoring Report.

BACKGROUND

8. The Authority is required to work to reduce risk and address the safety of its communities and to do so in a sustainable manner. The CRMIP outlines the principles against which the Authority measures its performance. Focussing on five key principles the performance is reported on a quarterly basis, with a focus on key risks and emerging trends.

INFORMATION

9. The Performance Report for the period 1st April 2026 – 30th June 2026 is set out in Appendix 1. Unless otherwise stated, all figures are based on the first Quarter of the 2026/27 financial-year, with comparisons made to the same period of the previous financial-year (2025/26).

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Demonstrates the Authority's performance against the improvement and well-being objectives in the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2026/27.
Budget	Allows activity and key risks to be considered at part of the budget setting process.
Legal	Supports the Authority, as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to demonstrate how it is taking all reasonable steps, in exercising its functions, to meet its well-being objectives.
Staffing	Reporting is aligned to the CRMIP 2026/27 and includes an update on staffing matters.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	No implication identified.
Risks	Demonstrates how the Authority is managing its delivery against community risks.

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Performance Monitoring Report:
April 2026 – June 2026

Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE PREVENTION PROTECTION RESPONSE ENVIRONMENT

Contents

Our People Principle

1 Sickness Absence

The Service encourages employees to maintain good attendance while recognising that, from time to time, ill health may prevent employees from attending work.

During 2026/27 Quarter 1, sickness absence accounted for 4.5% of total time lost. This is a reduction from 4.9% in the previous year and indicates an overall improvement in attendance.

As of 30th June 2026, NWFRS employed 1,004 people, an increase of 25 since 31 March 2026.

Please note that year-to-date case numbers will not equal the sum of the quarters, as some absences span more than one quarter. Figures may also fluctuate between quarters due to changes in employee data.

i. All Sickness Absence

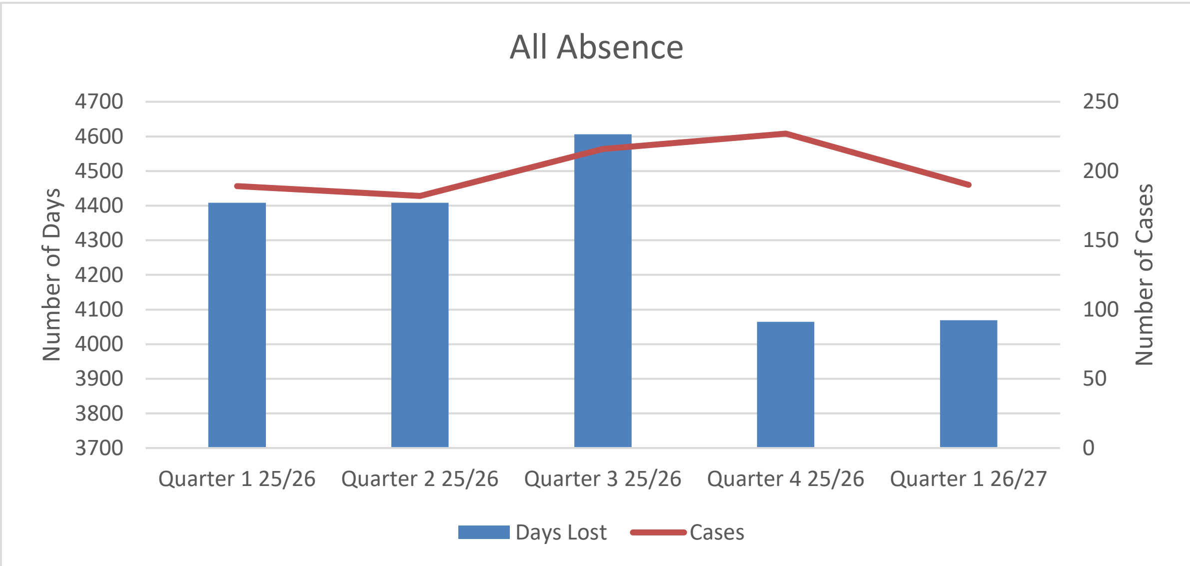


Figure 1. The number of absence cases and days absent Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous financial year.

Overall, days lost due to sickness absence has remained aligned to the previous Quarter (2025/26 Q4); the number of cases has reduced by 16.3% during Quarter 1, to 190 cases of absence in total. This improvement has continued to occur alongside an increase in overall staff numbers, indicating a continued positive trend in managing sickness absence across the Service.

Short term means individual periods of sickness of 27 calendar days or less. **Long term** means individual periods of 28 calendar days or more.

ii. Short Term Sickness

Short term sickness absence accounted for 0.96% of total time lost across all duty types during Quarter 1.

The number of days lost to short-term sickness continued to reduce during Quarter 1, with 855 days lost compared with 928 days in Quarter 4. The number of short-term sickness cases also decreased overall during Quarter 1, although it remained broadly in line with Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

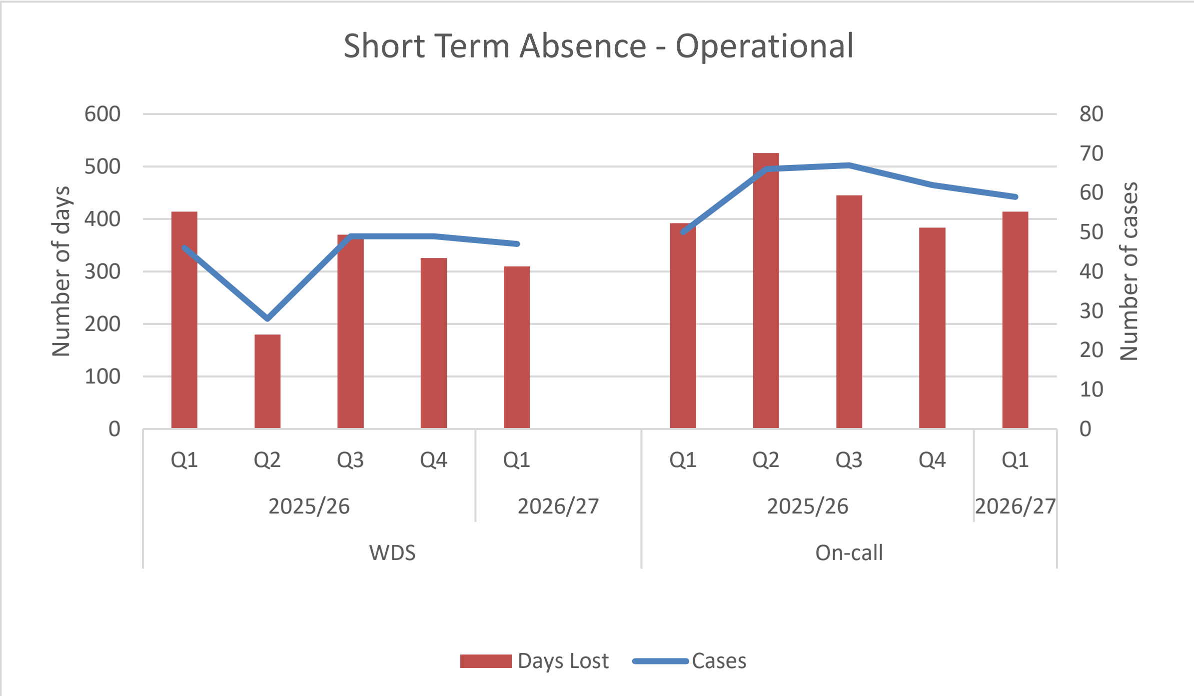


Figure 2. The number of short-term absence cases and days absent in operational roles in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous financial year.

(WDS – includes all wholetime operational staff, such as station-based, rural and flexi-duty officers).

Principal Officers and wider SLT has been split so operational members of SLT are included within wholetime figures, and Heads of Department are included within Corporate Departments).

Wholetime staff, who make up 29% of the workforce, accounted for 36% of total days lost due to short-term sickness during Quarter 1, with an average absence duration of 7 calendar days per employee.

On-call staff, who make up 52% of the workforce, accounted for an average of 48% of short-term absence cases during Quarter 1. The number is cases of short-term sickness absence for On-Call employees has reduced slightly to 59 during Quarter 1, whilst the number of days lost has increased by 8% to 414 days lost. The average duration of absence for on-call staff was 7 days during Quarter 1.

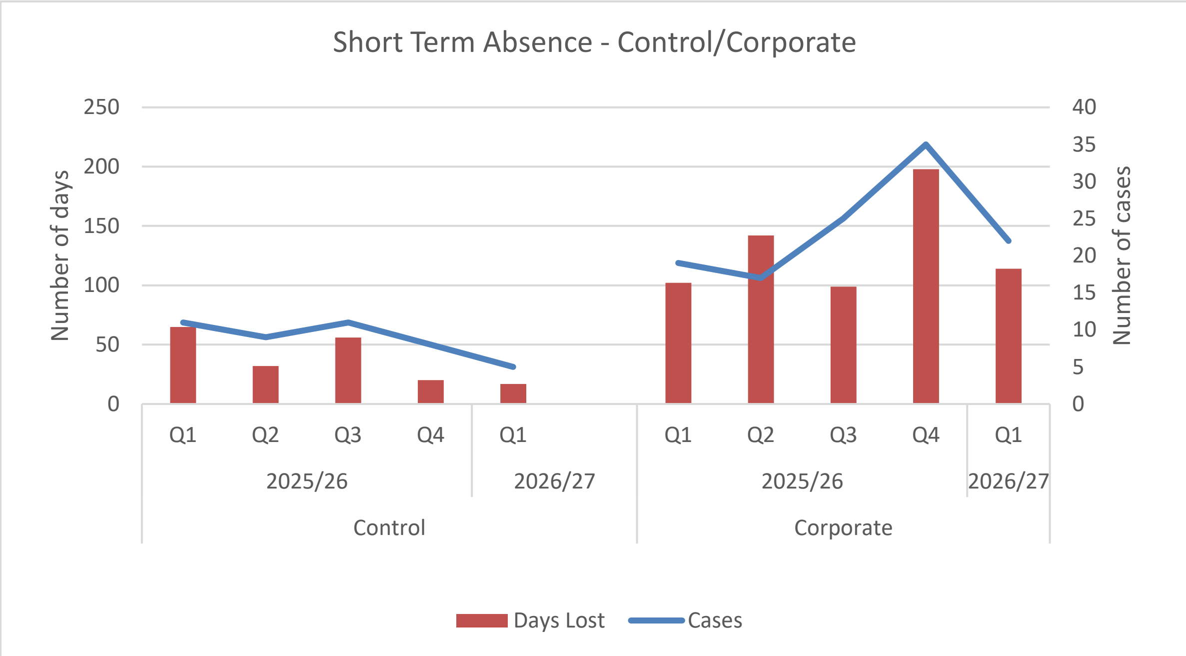


Figure 3. The number of short-term absence cases and days absent in control/corporate roles in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous financial year.

Short-term sickness absence within Control reduced during Quarter 1, with cases falling to 5 compared with 8 in Quarter 4. Days lost also reduced slightly, from 20 days in Quarter 4 to 17 days in Quarter 1. This represents the lowest level of both cases and days lost since the start of 2025/26 indicating an improved position for Control staff short-term sickness absence during the period.

Corporate staff, who make up 16% of workforce, accounted for 13% of short-term absence cases during Quarter 1, with both case numbers and days lost decreasing compared with previous quarters. During Quarter 1, short term sickness absence among corporate staff had an average duration of 5 days.

Top 3 Short Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

	ABSENCE REASON	CASES	LOST TIME %
1	Musculoskeletal - Back and spinal disorders	9	14.7%
2	Mental Health – Stress	11	12.6%
3	Vomiting, Diarrhoea	20	9.6%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

All Musculoskeletal conditions accounted for 28.5% of short-term sickness cases during Quarter 1, with back and spinal reasons being the most commonly reported. Short term absence due to musculoskeletal lasted an average of 9.3 days per person. Service funded physiotherapy and alternative physical therapies continues to be widely used, particularly for lower limb, shoulder, neck and back conditions, supporting early intervention and absence prevention.

All mental health reasons accounted for 15.3% of short-term sickness during Quarter 1, with stress being the highest at 12.8%. There were 11 cases of short-term sickness due to stress, both personal and work-related reasons, during Quarter 1, with an average duration of 9.9 days per person.

Vomiting/diarrhoea saw the highest number of short-term cases during Quarter 1, however this accounted for 9.6% of all short-term sickness, with absences lasting an average of 3.9 days.

iii. Long Term Sickness

Long-term sickness accounted for 3.5% of total time lost across all duty types during Quarter 1, continuing the reduction from 3.8% in 2025/26. Although Quarter 4 recorded fewer days lost to long-term sickness, the number of cases reduced by 24.6%, to 57 long-term sickness cases during Quarter 1.

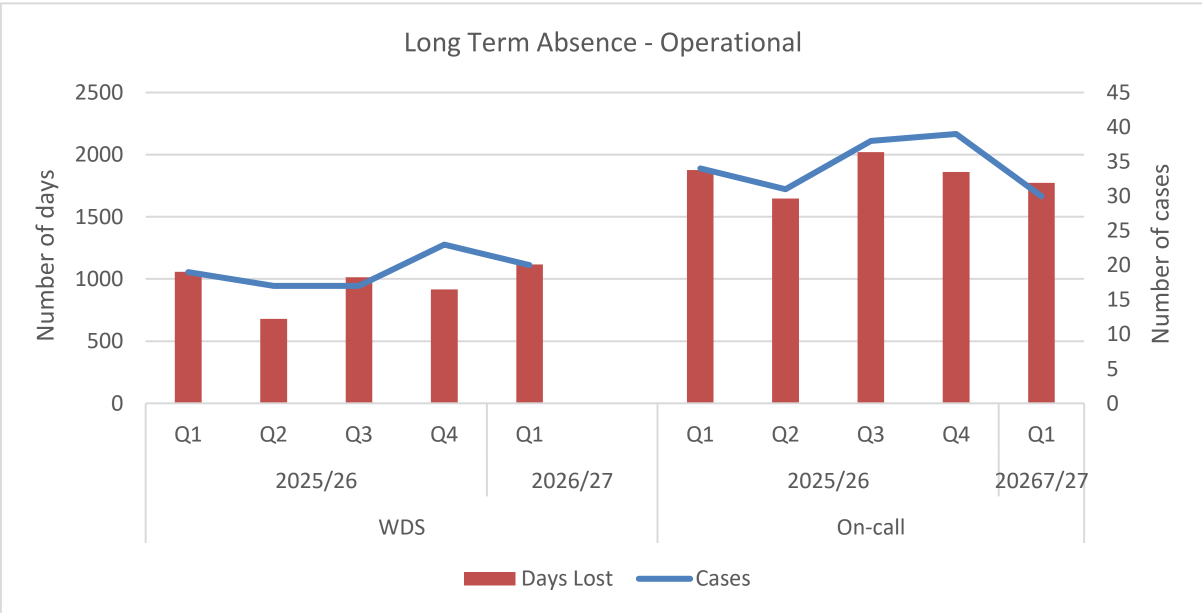


Figure 4. The number of long-term absence cases and days absent in operational roles in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous financial year.

Long-term sickness days for wholetime staff fluctuated throughout the previous year; Quarter 1 has seen an increase in the number of days absence compared with Quarter 4; however, the number of cases has reduced again. The average duration of wholetime absences was 50.8 days during this period; however, some began in previous quarters, with the overall average duration increasing to 109 days.

For on-call staff, both days lost and the number of long-term sickness cases reduced slightly during Quarter 1 compared with Quarter 4. On-call absence accounted for 55% of all long-term absence, with overall absences lasting an average of 145 days.

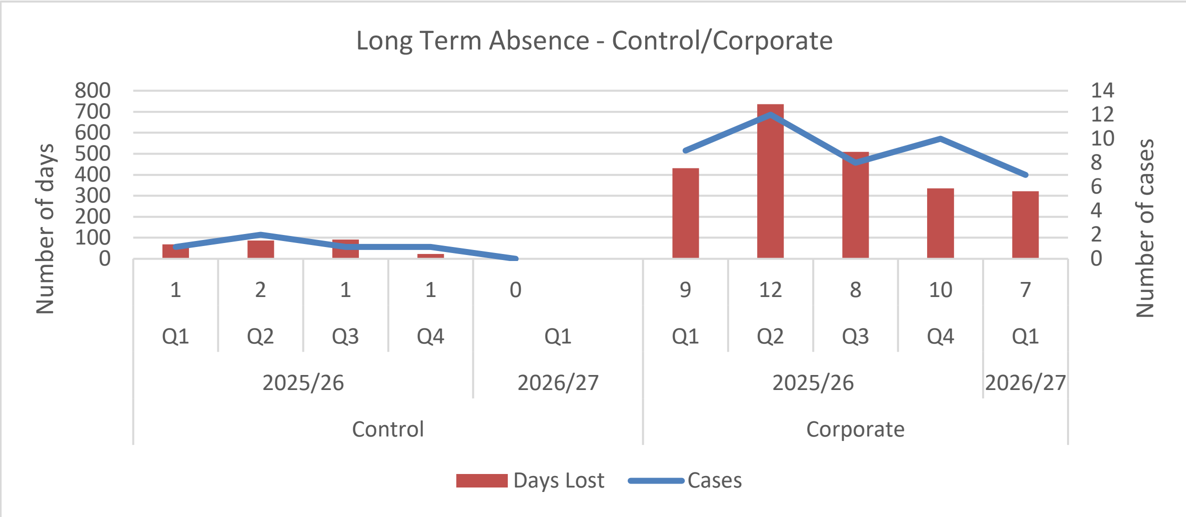


Figure 5. The number of long-term absence cases and days absent in control/corporate roles in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous financial year.

There was no long-term sickness absence recorded for Control staff during Quarter 1.

Overall, corporate roles account for 15.6% of the Service's workforce and represented 10% of all long-term sickness absence cases during Quarter 1. Long term sickness absence for corporate staff, in terms of the number of days lost remained at a similar level to that of Quarter 4, however the number of cases reduced by 30%, to 7 cases during Quarter 1. The average duration of long-term sickness absence for corporate staff was 46 days during Quarter 1; however, some began in previous quarters, with the overall average duration rising to 79.8 days.

Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

	ABSENCE REASON	CASES	LOST TIME %
1	Mental Health - Stress	17	34.38%
2	Musculoskeletal - Lower Limb	9	14.37%
3	Musculoskeletal - Upper Limb	6	10.86%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers.

Absences due to Mental Health – stress, Musculoskeletal – lower limb and Musculoskeletal – upper limb continue to be the top 3 reasons for long term sickness during Quarter 1.

Mental health-related absence due to stress remained the most common reason for long-term sickness absence, accounting for 34.4% of long-term absence during Quarter 1. The average duration of these absences was 65 days during this period; however, some began in previous quarters, with the overall average duration increasing to 96.5 days.

Mental health and wellbeing continue to be supported through internal provisions, such as occupational health and the employee assistance program along with signposting to external services, such as the Firefighters Charity and other specialist mental health agencies.

During Quarter 1, there were 15 long term sickness cases relating to musculoskeletal upper and lower limb conditions, resulting in a total of 811 days lost in the period. These absences often relate to recovery following surgery and the requirement for employees to regain full fitness, strength and range of movement before returning to an operational role. Where appropriate, modified duties and phased returns continue to be used to support earlier and safer returns to work.

Our Prevention Principle

2 All Incidents

All Incidents – **1,729** incidents were attended during the first Quarter of 2026/27, which is a reduction from the 1,811 incidents attended during Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

Fires – **568** fires were attended during the reporting period. Although this is a decrease of 20.5% from the 712 attended during 2025/26 (which was a higher than usual number of fires for this period), this is more closely aligned to our five-year average of 578.

False Alarms – **748** false alarms were recorded during the reporting period. This is a 5.4% reduction on the volume of false alarms recorded in the comparable period during the previous year.

SSCs – **413**, Special Service Call incidents were attended in the reporting period, representing the highest volume of Special service calls attended during any April – June period during the last 10 years.

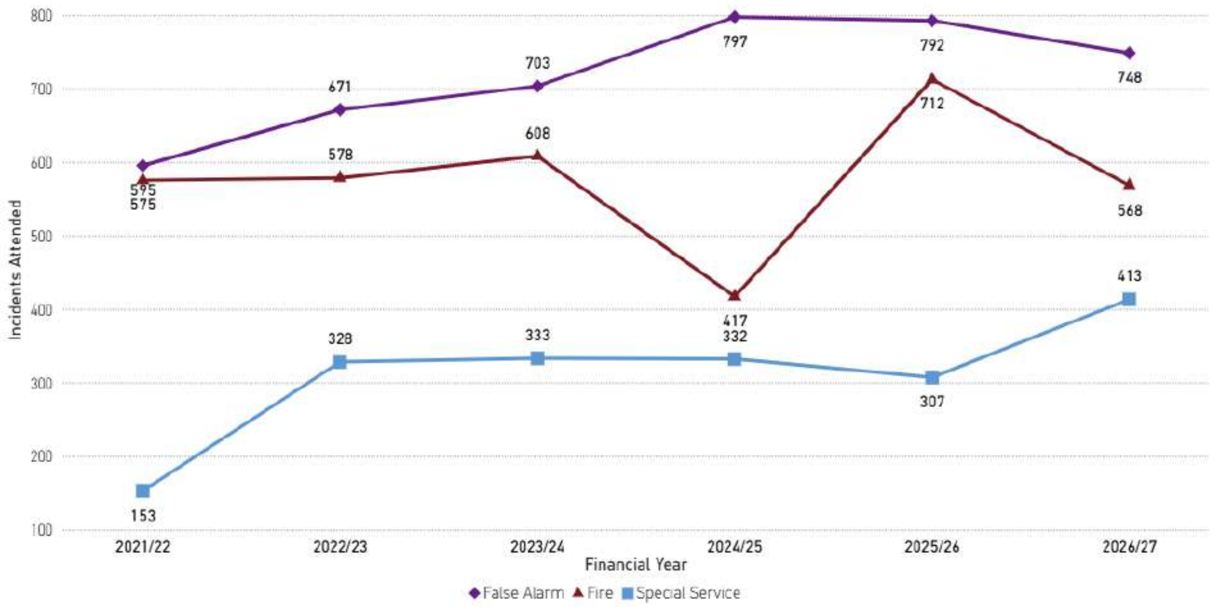


Figure 6. The number of incidents in each incident category, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous 5 financial years.

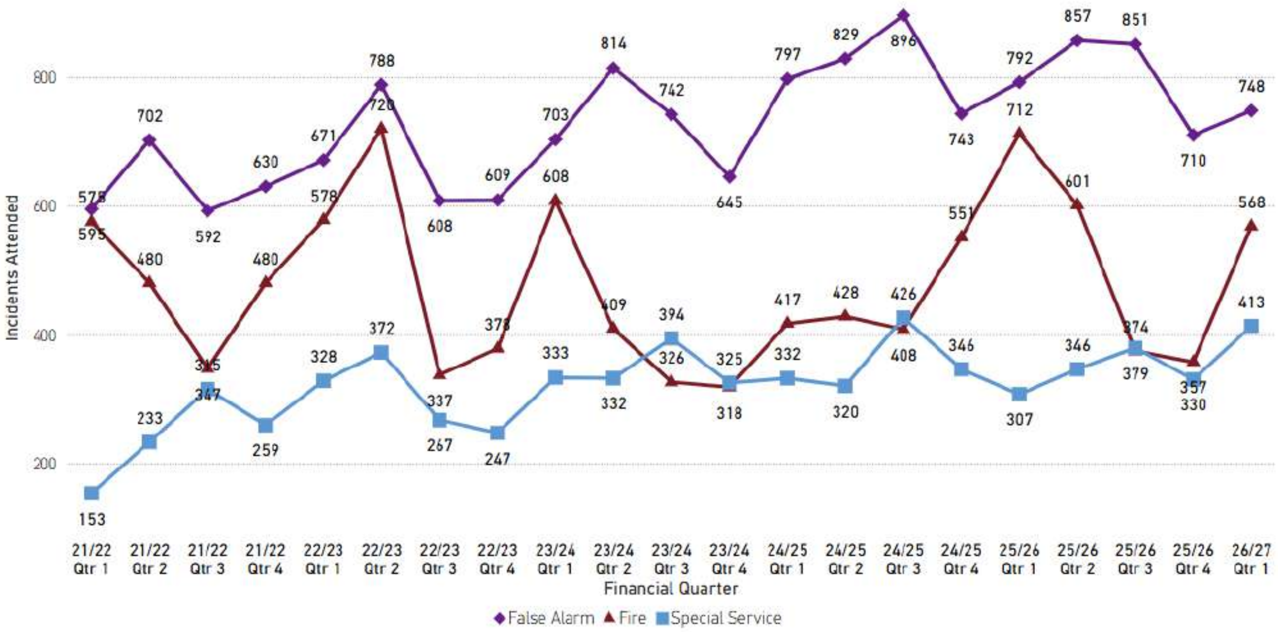


Figure 7. The number of incidents attended, by incident category, during each financial year and quarter

3 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

95 accidental dwelling fires were attended during the first Quarter of 2026/27, which is a 28.4% increase from 74 during the first Quarter of 2025/26.

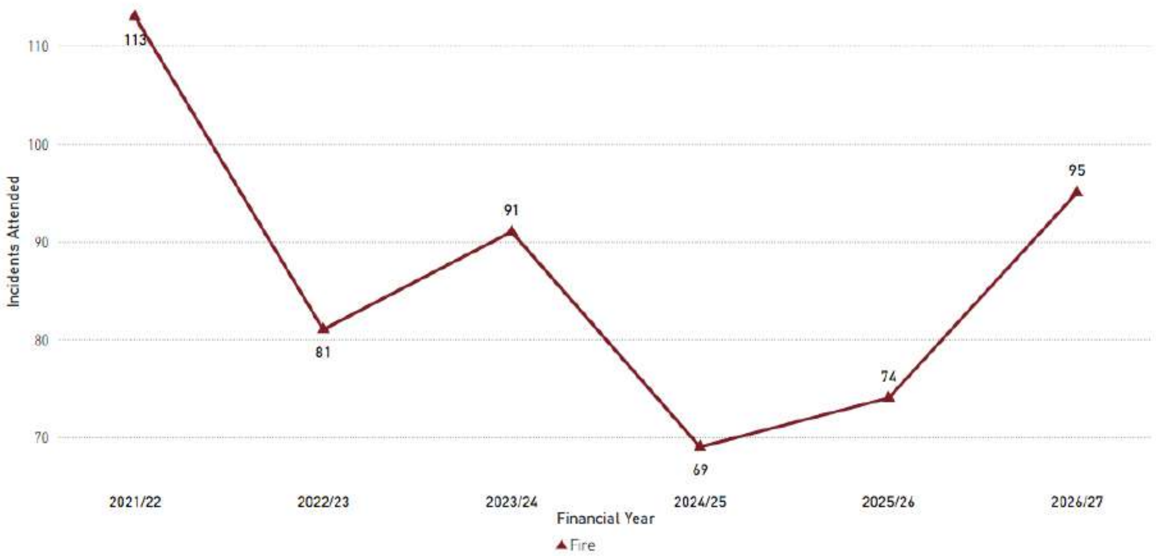


Figure 8. The number of accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous 5 financial years.

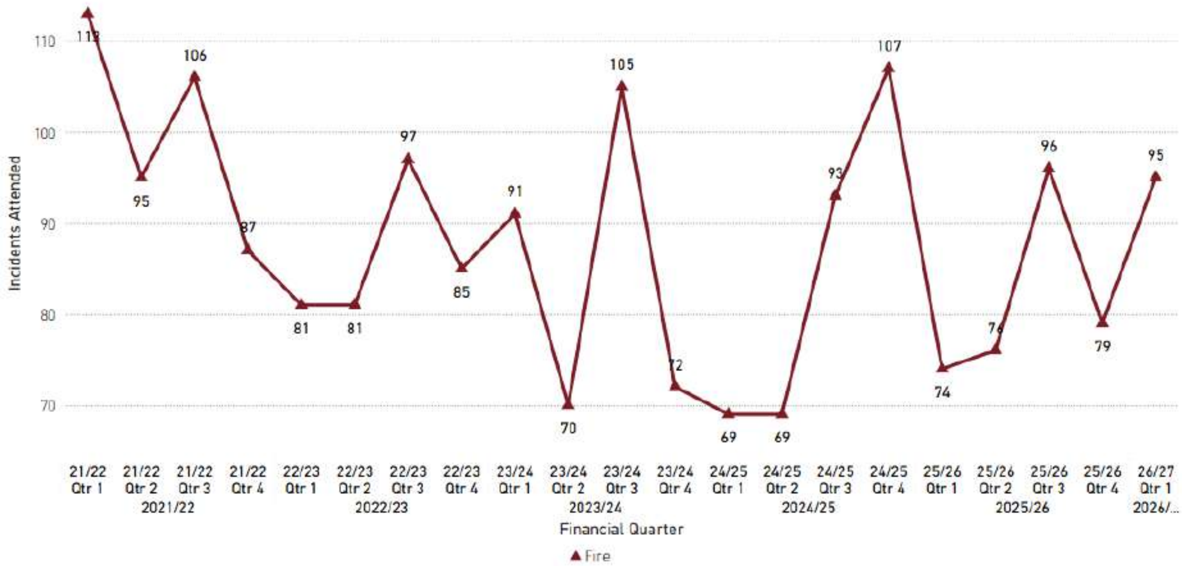


Figure 9. The number of accidental dwelling fires, attended in this Quarter and each Quarter of the last 5 financial years.

When looking across the previous 5 years the number of accidental dwelling fires per Quarter fluctuates throughout the year (fig. 9). However, there is an overall decreasing trend seen across the average number of ADFs in the previous 5 years.

Response Times to ADFs

The average response time to ADFs during Quarter 1 of 2026/27 was 11 minutes and 29 seconds, measured from receipt of the call to the arrival of the first appliance. This measure is calculated in accordance with national guidance and excludes certain incidents, meaning the number of incidents included may not match the total ADFs reported elsewhere in this report.

In line with the trends seen in the previous Quarter, an overall reduction in response time in most unitary authority areas in North Wales has been observed. Despite a higher number of ADFs this Quarter, the average response time has reduced overall.

There have been notable reductions across Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire. However, there was a large increase in response time compared to Quarter 4 last year in Anglesey.

The increase in average response times in Anglesey reflects the relatively low number of accidental dwelling fires attended during the quarter, with a single longer-than-average response having a greater impact on the overall average than would be expected during periods of higher incident activity.

County	ADFs	YoY	Avg Response Time (mm:ss)
Anglesey	13	↑ 5	17:06
Conwy	22	↑ 12	11:12
Denbighshire	16	↑ 4	09:22
Flintshire	20	↑ 2	10:44
Gwynedd	8	↓ -1	12:57
Wrexham	13	↓ -2	09:11
Total	**92**	**20**	**11:29**

Figure 10. The number of accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 broken down by unitary authority area. The change compared to the same period last year, and the average response time (based on the time of call to the arrival of the first appliance) during this period.

County	ADFs	YoY	Avg Response Time (mm:ss)
Anglesey	13	→ 0	13:25
Conwy	11	↓ -12	16:07
Denbighshire	13	↓ -1	13:29
Flintshire	16	↑ 2	13:54
Gwynedd	18	↑ 1	13:53
Wrexham	7	↓ -12	09:28
Total	**78**	**-22**	**13:40**

Figure 11. The number of accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q4 (January - March) during financial year 2025/26 broken down by unitary authority area. The change compared to the same period last year, and the average response time (based on the time of call to the arrival of the first appliance) during this period.

4 Leading Causes of Accidental Dwelling Fires

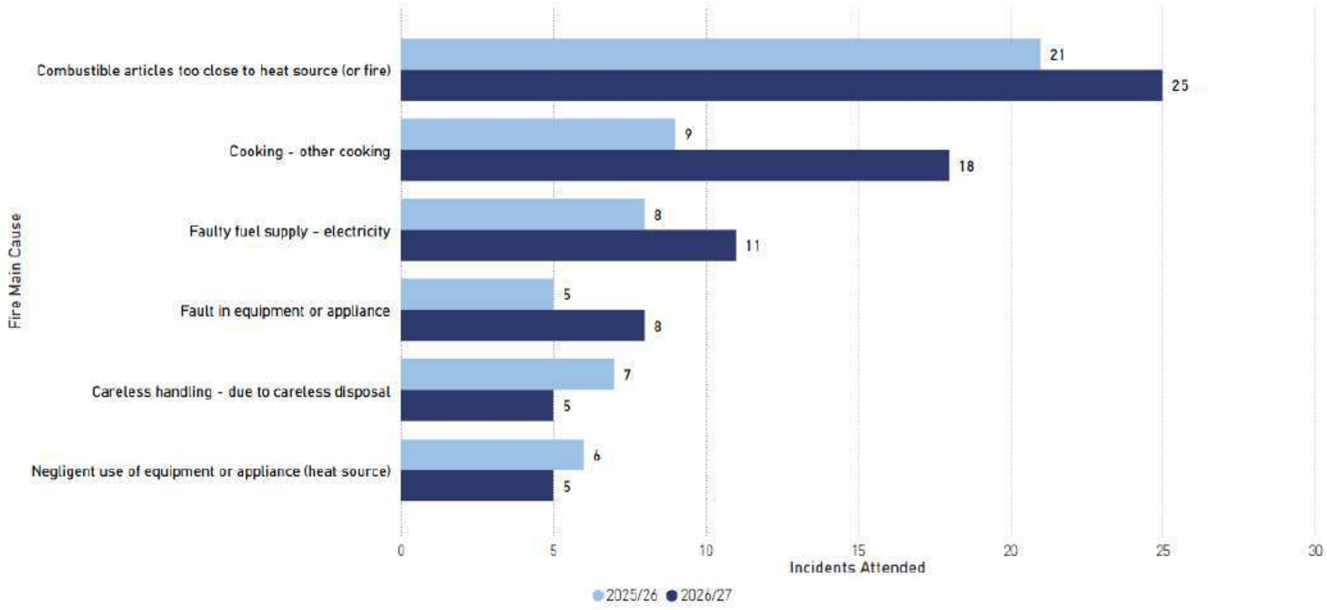


Figure 12. The top 6 main causes of accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous financial year.

During Quarter 1 of 2026/27 the most common cause of ADFs was '**Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)**', which was responsible for 26% of ADFs (25 out of 95) attended in the reporting period. This is a similar proportion (28%) to ADFs with this cause in Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

Other causes of ADFs showed an increase in the same reporting period. For example:

- 'Cooking – Other cooking', doubled in number to **18** during Quarter 1 of 2026/27 when compared to Quarter 1 of 2025/26. Although, this is similar to Quarter 4 2025/26 where this cause was responsible for 20 ADFs.

Despite this, a few main causes saw a decrease. For example:

- 'Careless handling – due to careless disposal', which decreased from 7 (9%) in 2025/26 to **5** (5%).

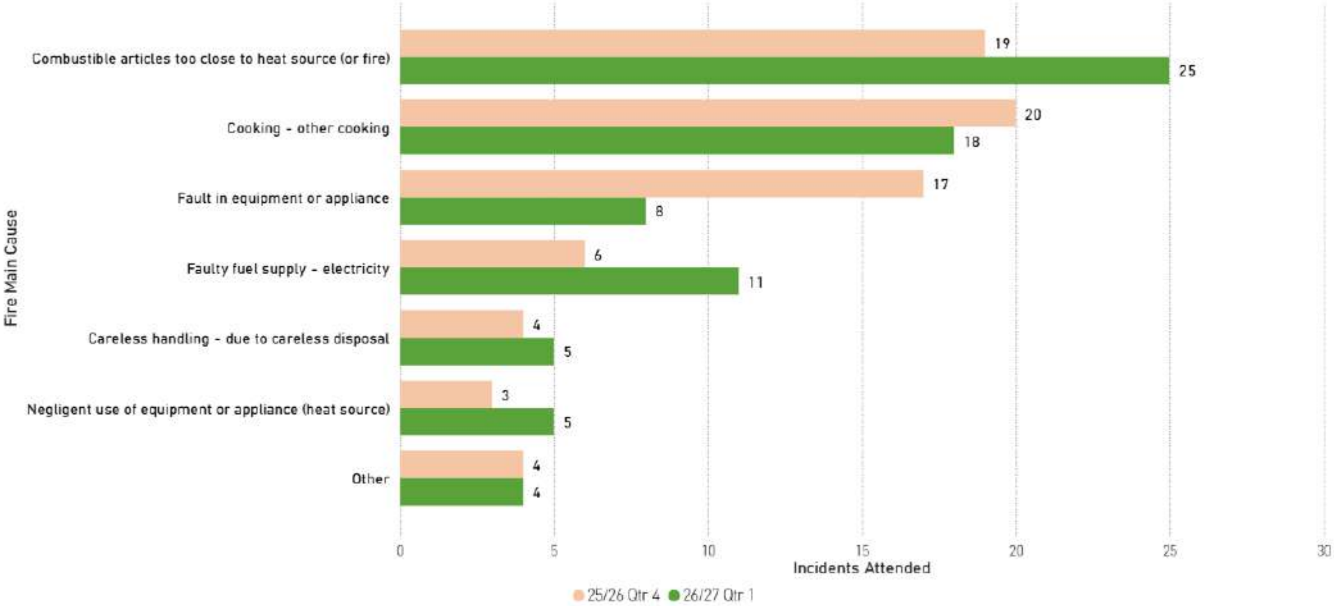


Figure 13. The top 6 main causes of accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and Q4 (January-March) during the financial year 2025/26.

When comparing Quarter 1 2026/27 to Quarter 4 of 2025/26 (fig.13) you can see that there have been increases in '**Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)**' and **'Faulty fuel supply – electricity'** but decreases in **'Cooking – other cooking'** and **'Fault in equipment or appliance'**.

While '**Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)**' has increased compared to Quarter 4 of 2025/26, it is still not close to the unusually high volume of 35 ADFs caused by this reason in Quarter 3 of 2025/26 and is still within the range normally seen in any Quarter.

5 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

Quarter 1 of 2026/27 saw the highest number of ADFs recorded in a first Quarter over the past five years; however, casualty numbers were the lowest recorded for any first Quarter during that period. This has also shown a decrease when compared to the previous Quarter, from **14** total casualties to **9**.

Due to the low number of injuries overall, individual categories can have a greater influence on the reported pattern and should be interpreted with caution.

Importantly, no serious or fatal injuries were recorded during the quarter, continuing the positive trend seen over recent years, with serious injuries remaining at low levels

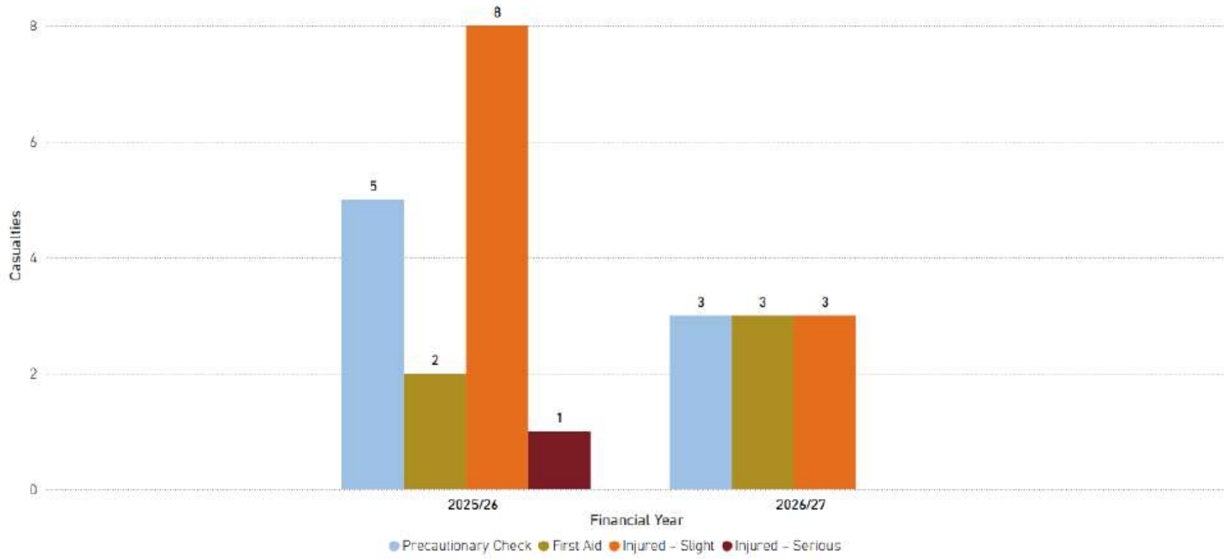


Figure 14. The number of casualties from accidental dwelling fires, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous financial year.

Throughout 2025/26, the largest proportion of casualties from ADFs was recorded during Quarter 3. In that Quarter, the number of ADFs that were attended were similar to Quarter 1 of 2026/27 (96 in Q3 vs 95 in Q1). But the number of casualties recorded in Q3 was higher than the amount typically seen in proportion to the number of ADFs. When looking at the previous 8 Quarters we can see that the high numbers seen in Quarter 3 were above-average (fig.14).

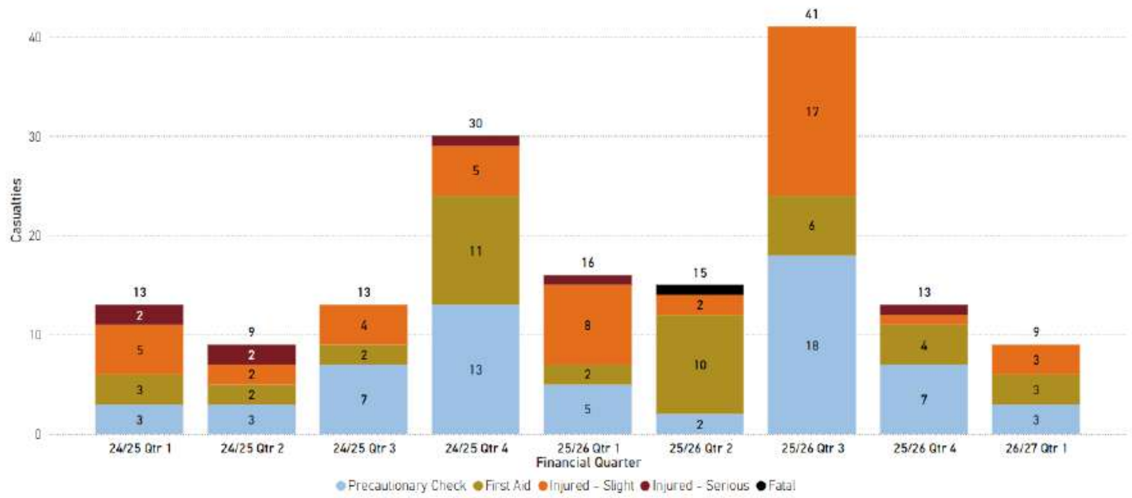


Figure15. The number casualties from accidental dwelling fires, attended in this Quarter and each Quarter of the last 2 financial years.

Further analysis is planned to better understand recent changes in the proportion of casualties recorded, that resulted from ADFs.

6 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **86** (90%) of the accidental dwelling fires attended during Quarter 1 of 2026/27.

Alarms operated and raised the alarm at **49** (51%) of the ADFs attended during the reporting period. Of these 49 ADFs, the fire was confined to the room of origin for **44** (90%).

Alarms were not fitted at **9** (9%) of the ADFs attended.

Of the 95 ADFs attended, **83** were confined to the room of origin, and **12** were not confined.

When looking at the previous 2 financial years, there has been a decreasing trend seen in the number of ADFs with no alarm fitted. There has also been an increasing trend seen in the number of fires that are confined to the room of origin.

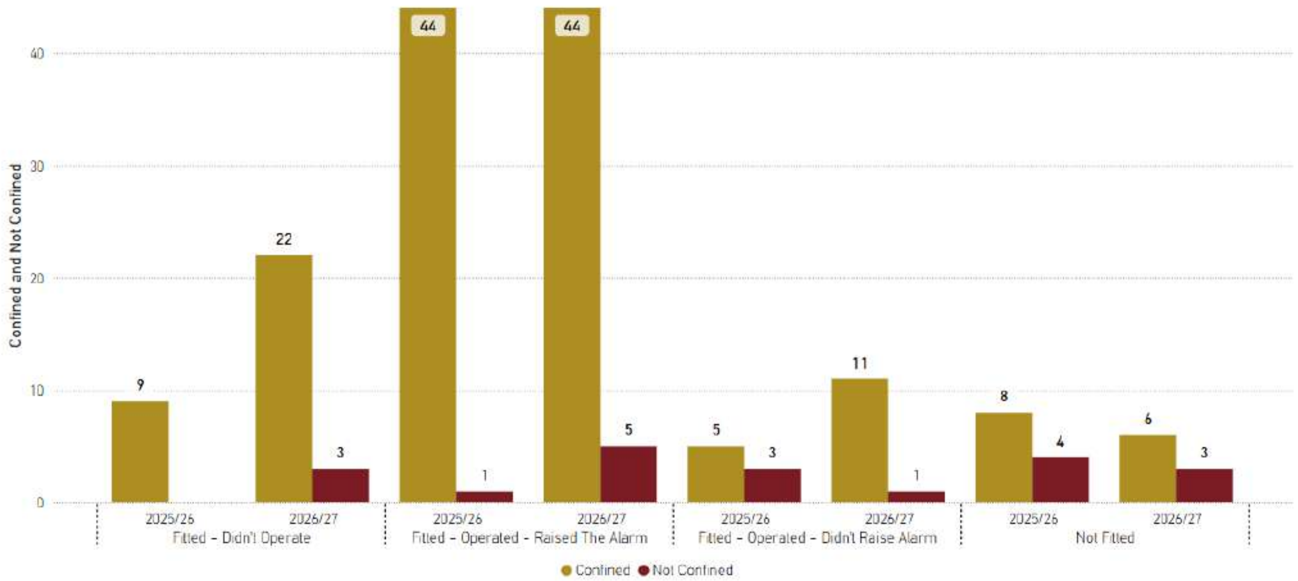


Figure 16. The number of accidental dwelling fires by status of smoke detectors and confinement, attended in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous financial year.

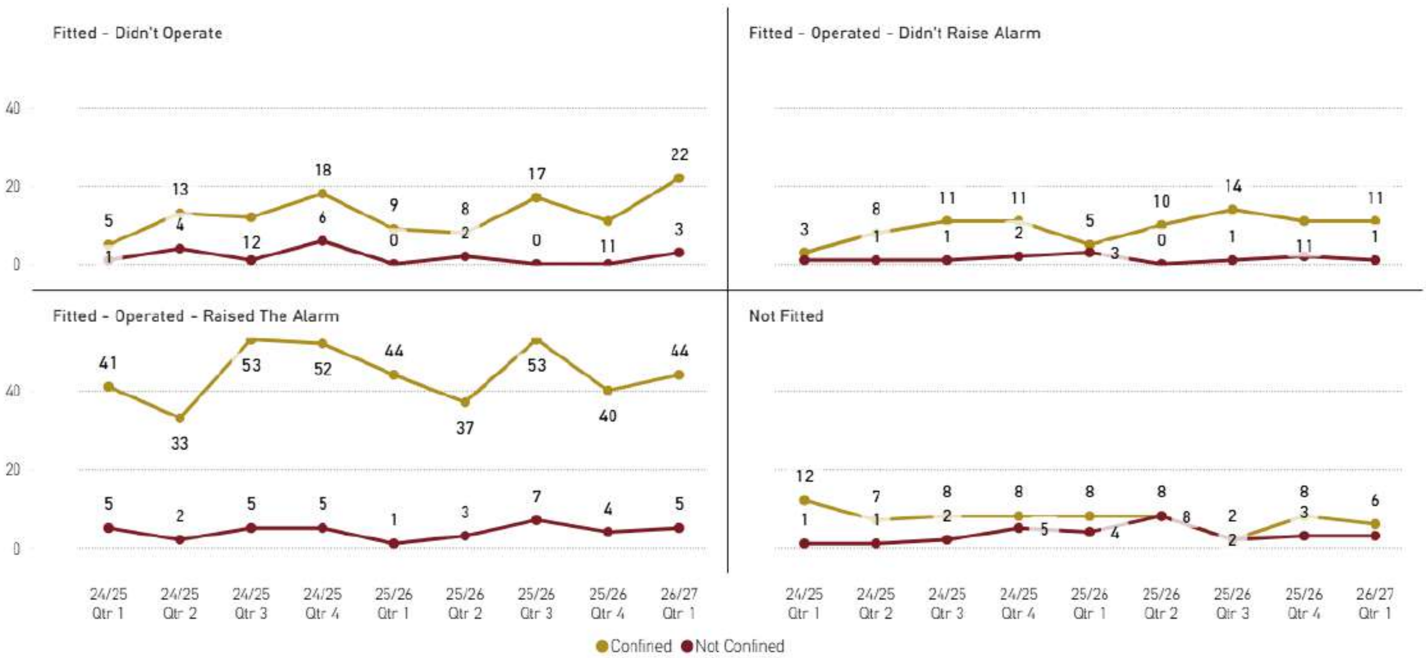


Figure 17. The number of accidental dwelling fires by status of smoke detectors and confinement, attended in this Quarter and each Quarter of the previous financial year.

Actions taken to support the most vulnerable to fires in their homes:

Hot-spotting activity continues to be undertaken following incidents, with post-incident prevention responses proportionate to the level of identified risk.
The Prevention Team continues to maintain oversight of SAWC delivery through weekly monitoring meetings, enabling active management of performance and emerging risks.

The Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continues to work in partnership with Corporate Communications to proactively promote fire, road, and water safety messaging across all appropriate media platforms, supporting wider prevention and public safety objectives.

Engagement with Children and Young People:

Educational visits to schools in Quarter 1 2026/27

Schools Visited = 55

Number of pupils = 5077

Fire Cadets

Fire Cadet Units continue to operate in Amlwch, Bala, Chirk and Tywyn.

Phoenix

Number of courses run	**4**
Number of CYP	**41**
% Behaviour improvement	**73%**
% Positive feedback	**100%**
% Agored Cymru	**78%**
% of CYP completed course	**90%**

During Quarter 1, NWFRS participated in the All-Wales Youth Meeting in Llandrindod Wells. NWFRS have achieved accreditation as a King's Trust Award centre, following the successful implementation of the required policies and procedures.

Building on this achievement, NWFRS is scheduled to pilot its first King's Trust Phoenix programme in January 2027. Subject to a successful review, all three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services will adopt the King's Trust qualification from April 2027, supporting the NFCC Early Intervention Framework.

Work is also progressing with education partners across North Wales to explore recognition of the qualification as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate, helping to enhance opportunities and outcomes for young people.

7 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

This Quarter SSCs for non-RTC incidents have seen a substantial increase compared to Quarter 1 in the previous 5 years (fig. 18), there has also been an increase in RTC calls. Overall, there has been a **34.5%** increase (413 in 2026/27 and 307 in 2025/26) from Quarter 1 last year. There has also been a rise seen in SSCs when comparing this Quarter to each Quarter in 2025/26 (fig. 19).

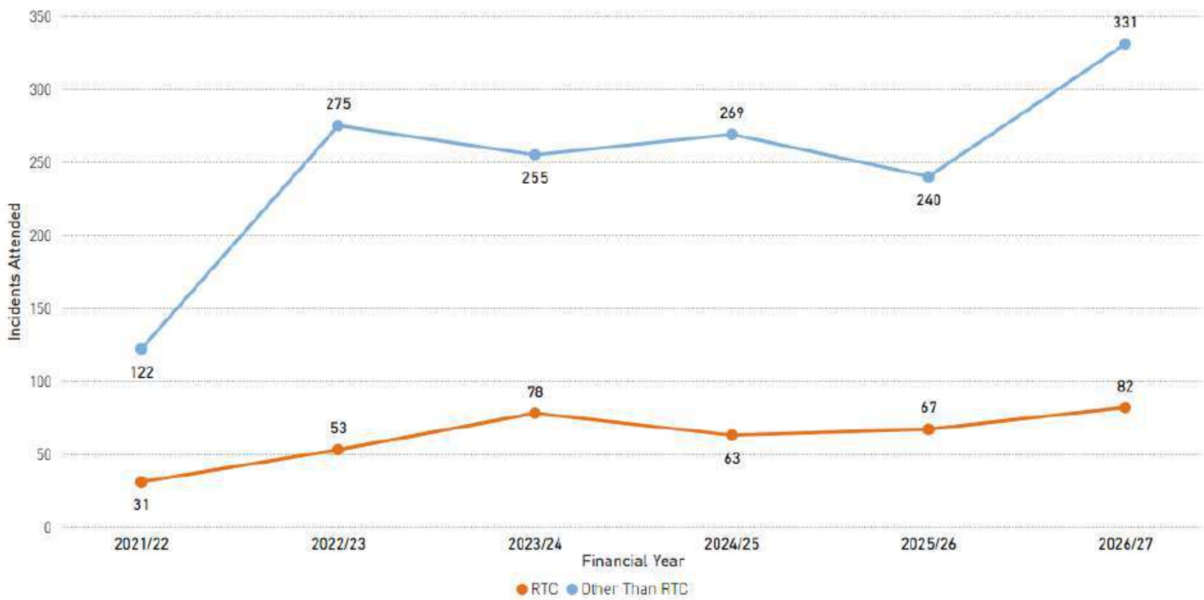


Figure 18. The number of Special Service Calls, split by RTC and non-RTC, in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27, and the previous 5 financial years.

The most notable increase in SSCs has been in the category **'Assist other agencies: Other assistance to Police/Ambulance',** predominantly "gaining entry" incidents. This is likely to reflect NWFRS's participation in an All-Wales trial, introduced in April 2026, which enables direct referrals from the Ambulance Service, together with the extension of the arrangement to the St John Ambulance Falls Team from June 2026. The increase therefore primarily reflects changes in service delivery arrangements and collaborative working with partner agencies.

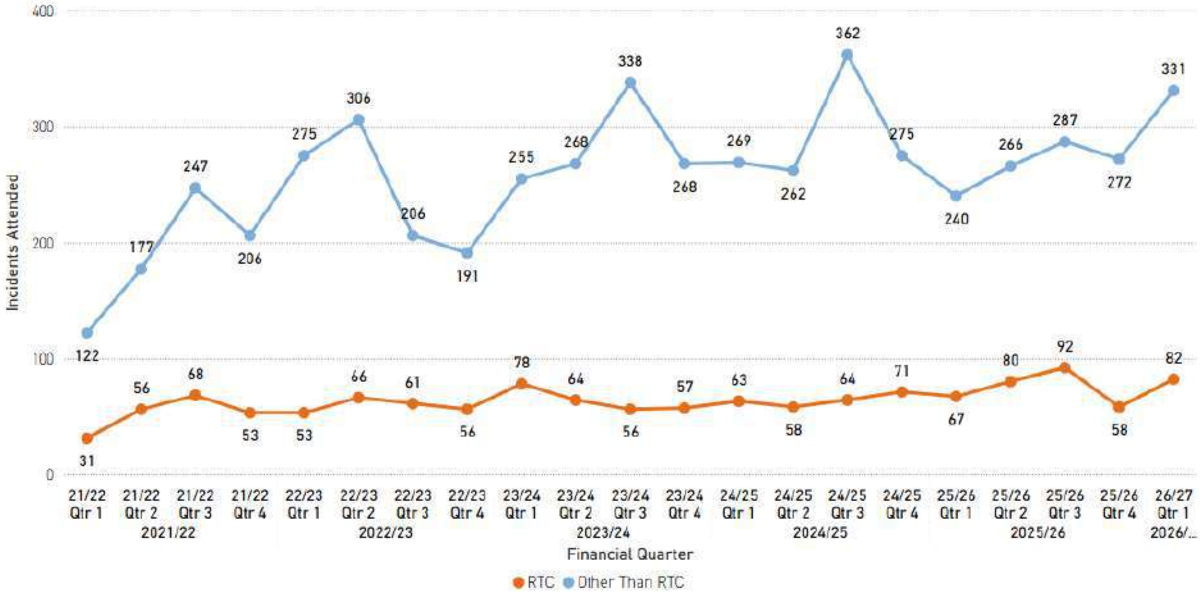


Figure 19. The number of Special Service Calls, split by RTC and non-RTC, in this Quarter and each Quarter of the previous 5 financial years.

Leading SSC categories for Quarter 1 2026/27 (other than RTC) included:

- 166 ‘**Assist Other Agencies’** incidents were attended during Quarter 1, 43% higher than the 116 incidents recorded during the same period in 2025/26.
- 32 ‘**Effecting Entry/Exit’** incidents were attended during Quarter 1, 77% higher than the 18 incidents recorded during the same period in 2025/26.
- 23 ‘**Other Rescue/Release of Persons**’ incidents were attended during Quarter 1, 26% lower than the 31 incidents recorded during the same period in 2025/26.
- 25 ‘**Removal of Objects from People**’ incidents were attended during Quarter 1, 177% higher than the 9 incidents recorded during the same period in 2025/26.

Road traffic collision incidents increased from 58 in Quarter 4 2025/26 to 82 in Quarter 1 2026/27. However, ‘Assist Other Agencies’ incidents have remained the most common category of Special Service Calls over the past five years.

Road Safety actions taken to date:

Olivia's story
During Quarter 1, the Olivia's Story road safety intervention was delivered to 368 college students, supporting targeted engagement with young people around the risks associated with road use and driver behaviour.

Op Atal Team
The Operation Atal team continues to work in partnership with North Wales Police (NWP) to educate drivers on the Fatal Five causes of serious road traffic collisions. During Quarter 1:

- 1,509 roadside presentations were delivered; and
- 118 drivers were issued with driving-related prosecutions following enforcement activity.

BikerDown
Two Biker Down sessions were delivered during Quarter 1, resulting in engagement with 40 participants. The programme continues to provide specialist safety advice aimed at reducing motorcycle-related casualties.

Other Ongoing Road Safety Activity
In addition to the above, NWFRS continues to undertake a range of road safety initiatives, including:

- Working in partnership with North Wales Police on the launch of Operation Apex, including the introduction of new PRIME road markings on two roads in North Wales to assist motorcyclists in safely negotiating bends; and
- Developing targeted engagement resources to support older drivers, recognising changing risk profiles within this group.
- Developing a bid to secure grant funding from Toyota (Deeside). This funding will be used to purchase equipment to deliver education activities within the community.

8 Safe and Well Checks

A total of **3,617** SAWCs were completed in Quarter 1 of 2026/27, of which:

- **1,408** (39%) were high-priority checks, of which **689** (49%) resulted from referrals made by partner agencies.
- **712** (20%) were medium-priority checks, of which **127** (18%) resulted from referrals made by partner agencies.
- **1,497** (41%) were low-priority checks, of which **107** (7%) resulted from referrals made by partner agencies.

Whilst fewer SAWCs were completed overall than in Quarter 1 of 2025/26, high-priority SAWCs increased from 1,265 (27%) in Quarter 1 of 2025/26 to **1,408** (39%) in Quarter 1 of 2026/27. This reflects the Service's continued focus on increasing the proportion of high-risk interventions.

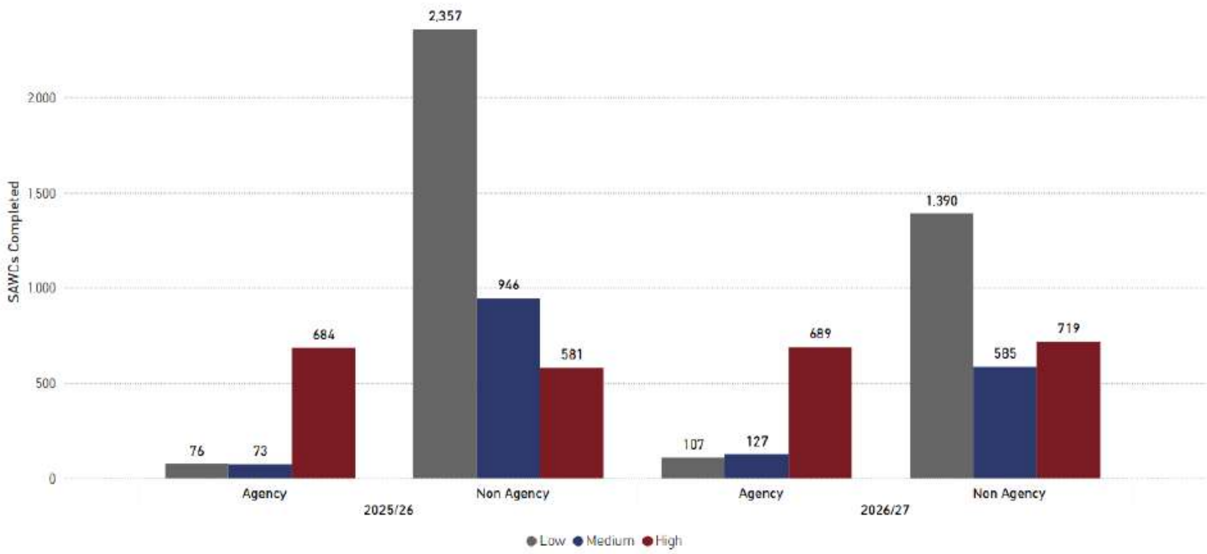


Figure 20. The number of Safe and Well Checks, split by agency or non-agency and status, in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the same period in 2025/26.

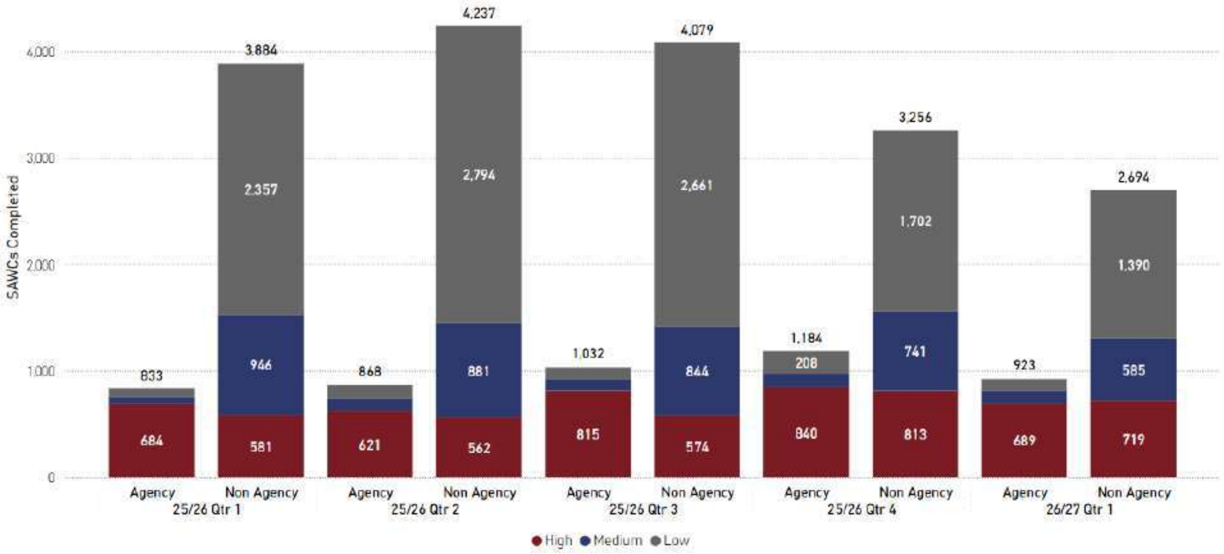


Figure 21. The number of Safe and Well Checks, split by agency or non-agency and status, in this Quarter and the previous financial year.

A total of **440** (12.1%) of the SAWCs completed in Quarter 1 2026/27 were requested to be conducted in Welsh.

84% of Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs) completed during Quarter 1 2026/27 were completed within their target timescale. A further 7.8% were completed within 30 days of their target completion date.

Performance against the target completion timescale, for high-priority Safe and Well Checks improved slightly during Quarter 1 2026/27, with 66% completed within target, compared with 64% in Quarter 4 2025/26.

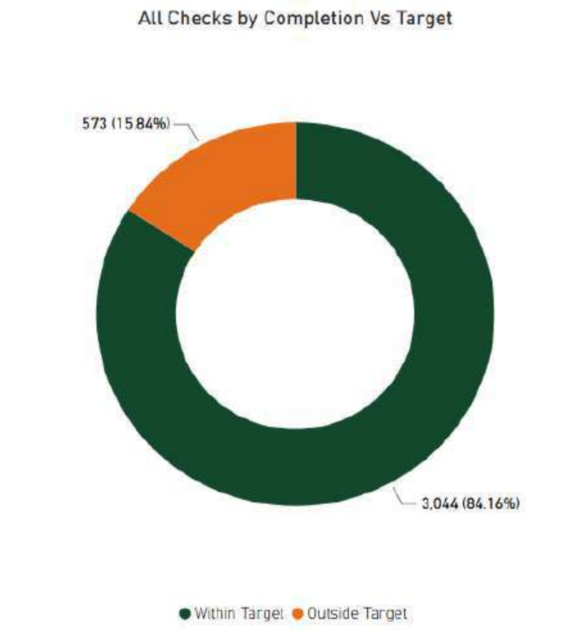


Figure 22. The number of Safe and Well Checks completed by target completion in this Quarter.

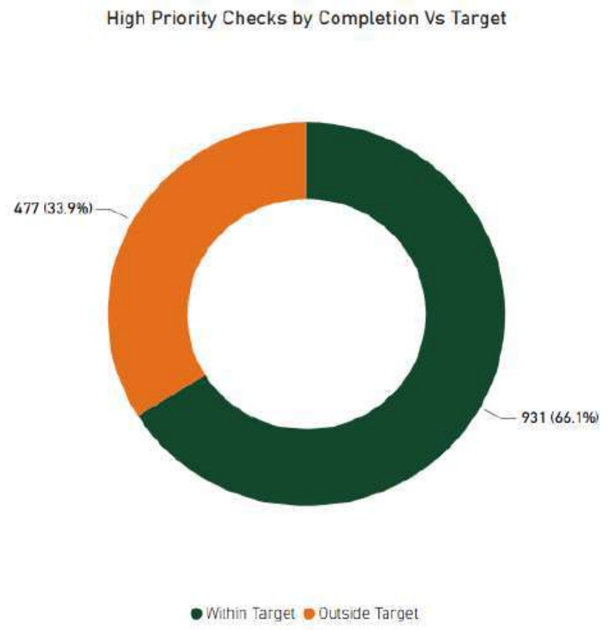


Figure 23. The number of high-priority Safe and Well Checks completed by target completion in this Quarter.

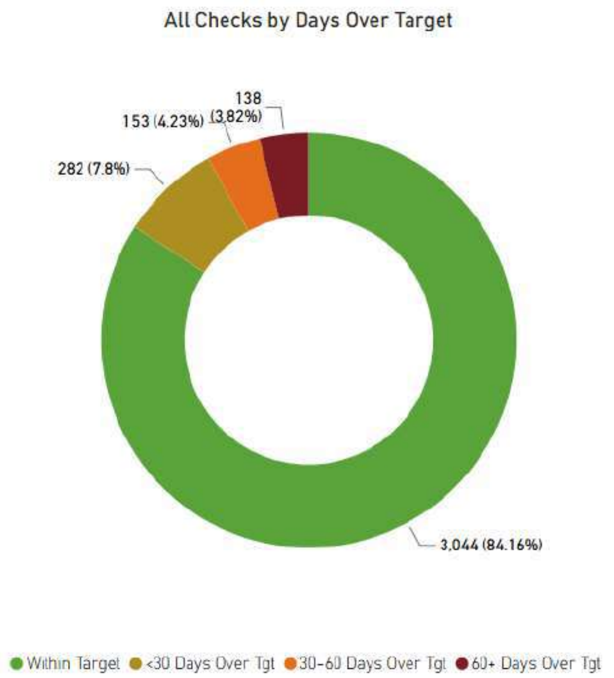


Figure 24. The number of Safe and Well Checks completed by completion time in this Quarter.

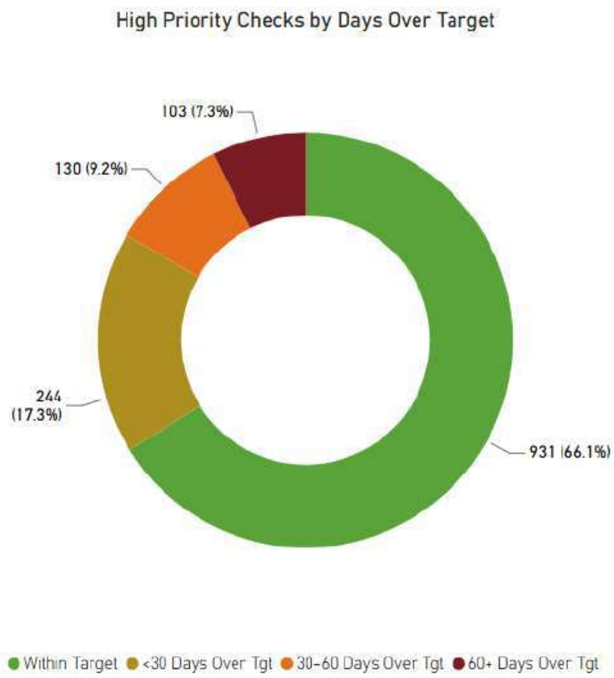


Figure 25. The number of high-priority Safe and Well Checks completed by completion time in this Quarter.

Actions taken to date:

A number of measures have been introduced to increase the delivery of high-risk Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs), including prioritising high-risk referrals for operational crews. In addition, a new All-Wales risk stratification model has been approved and will be implemented from the start of Quarter 3 2026/27.

The revised approach will support a greater focus on individuals at highest risk of fire, helping to increase the proportion of high-risk SAWCs in line with Welsh Government expectations and ensuring resources are targeted where they can have the greatest impact.

Waiting list

The Safe and Well Check (SAWC) referral waiting list continues to be closely monitored, with particular attention given to high-risk referrals. While the number of referrals awaiting completion increased during Quarter 1 compared with Quarter 4, the overall position remains improved compared to Quarter 3 2025/26.

At the end of Quarter 1 2026/27, there were 1,243 referrals awaiting completion, compared with 1,046 at the end of Quarter 4 2025/26 and 1,479 at the end of Quarter 3 2025/26.

A range of measures remain in place to support delivery and reduce waiting times. The referral list is being managed collectively by operational crews, Home Safety Support Workers (HSSWs), Wholetime Day Staff Relief personnel and staff undertaking modified duties. In addition, WDSR staff have increased the number of telephone-based SAWCs being undertaken, and operational watches have been asked to prioritise medium and high-risk referrals. These measures are helping to ensure that those at greatest risk continue to be prioritised while reducing the overall waiting list.

Our Protection Principle

9 False Alarms

A total of **748** false alarms were attended during Quarter 1 2026/27, compared with 710 during Quarter 4 2025/26. This figure includes false alarms across all property types.
Despite being higher than the preceding Quarter, the number of false alarms remained below that recorded during the equivalent period in each of the previous two years (fig. 27).

The increase was driven by a rise in Good Intent false alarms, from 267 to **306** incidents, while Malicious false alarms decreased slightly from 13 to **12** incidents.
False alarms due to apparatus remained unchanged at **430** incidents.

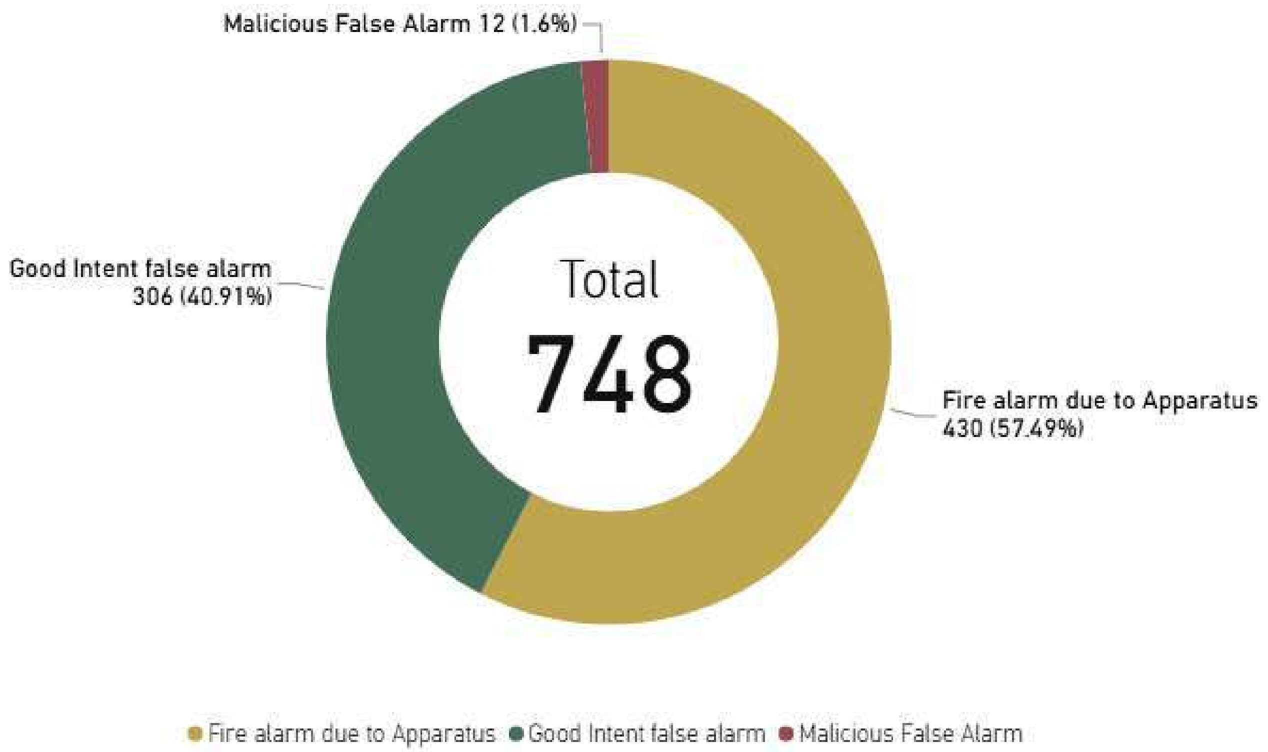


Figure 26. The number of false alarms in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

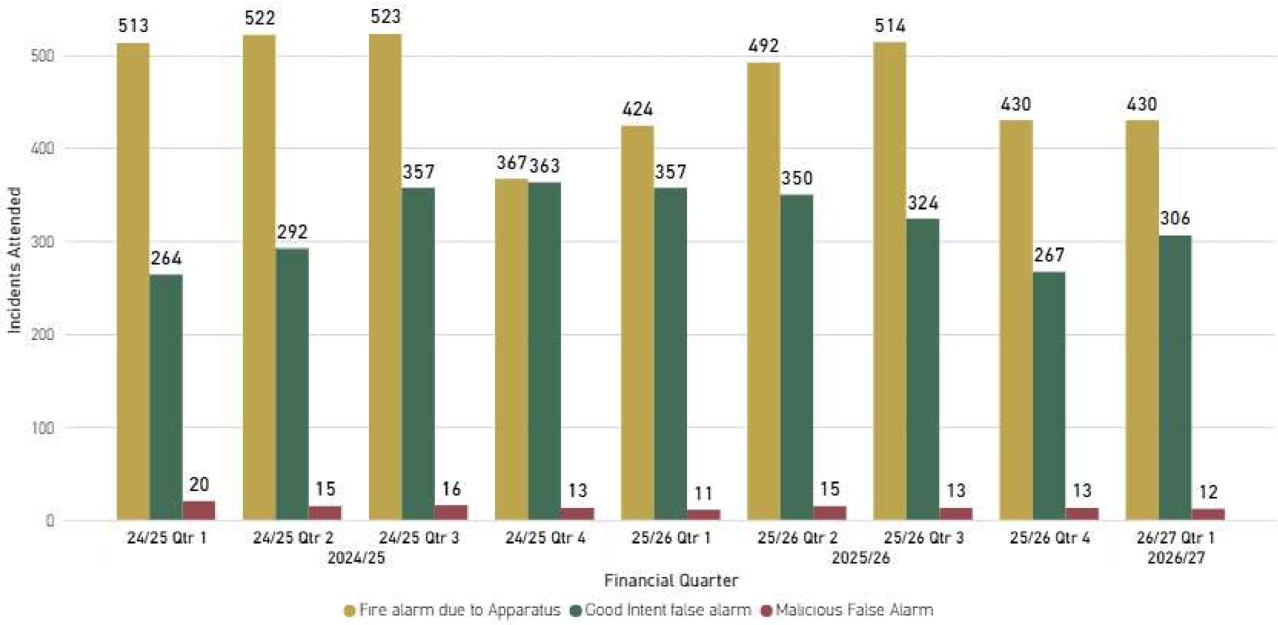


Figure 27. The number of false alarms in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 2 financial years.

10 Commercial AFA calls

A total of **381** commercial Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) calls were received during Quarter 1 2026/27, of which **two** incidents were attended.

Although this was slightly higher than the preceding Quarter, the number of commercial AFA calls remained below the 418 recorded during the equivalent period in 2025/26.

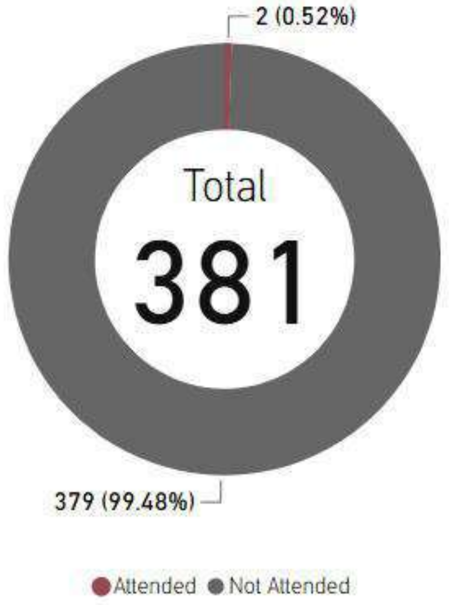


Figure 28. The number of Commercial AFA calls in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

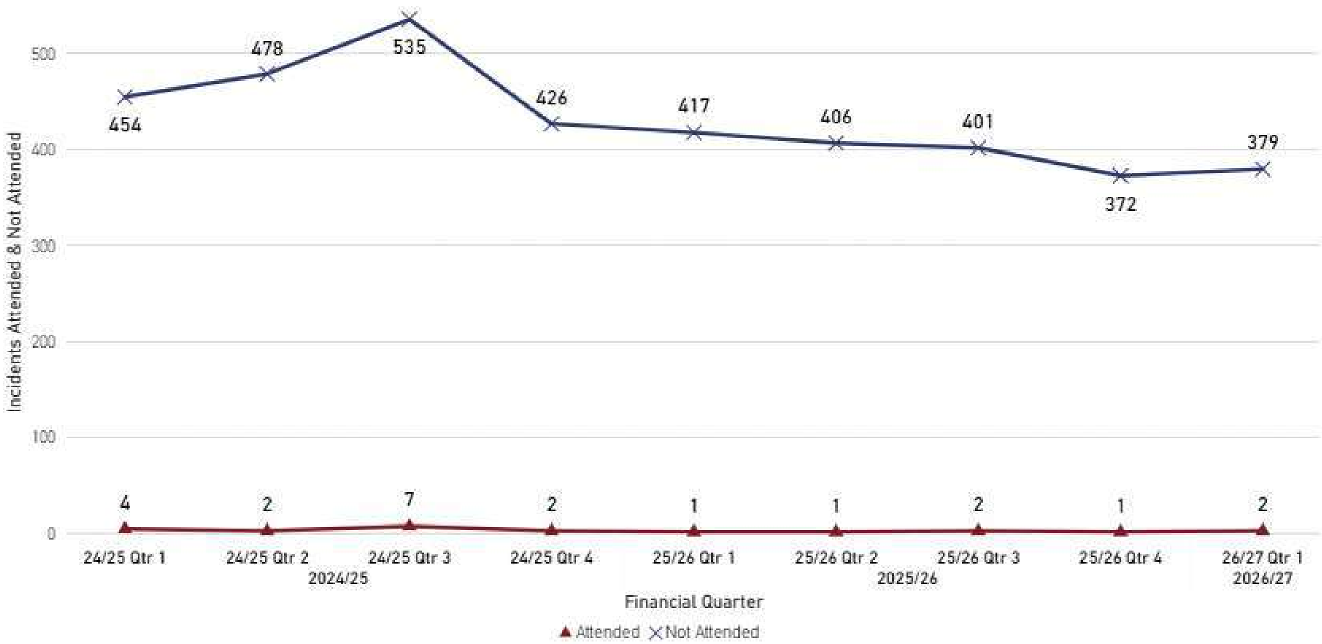


Figure 29. The number of Commercial AFA calls in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 2 financial years.

11 Hospital AFA calls

A total of **109** hospital Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) calls were received during Quarter 1 2026/27, compared with 82 in Quarter 4 2025/26. Despite this increase from the preceding Quarter, the number of hospital AFA calls remained below the 119 recorded during the equivalent period in 2025/26 (fig. 31).

Of the calls received, **33.9%** resulted in an attendance, compared with 42.6% in Quarter 4 2025/26. This was broadly consistent with the proportion attended during Quarter 1 2025/26 (33.6%).

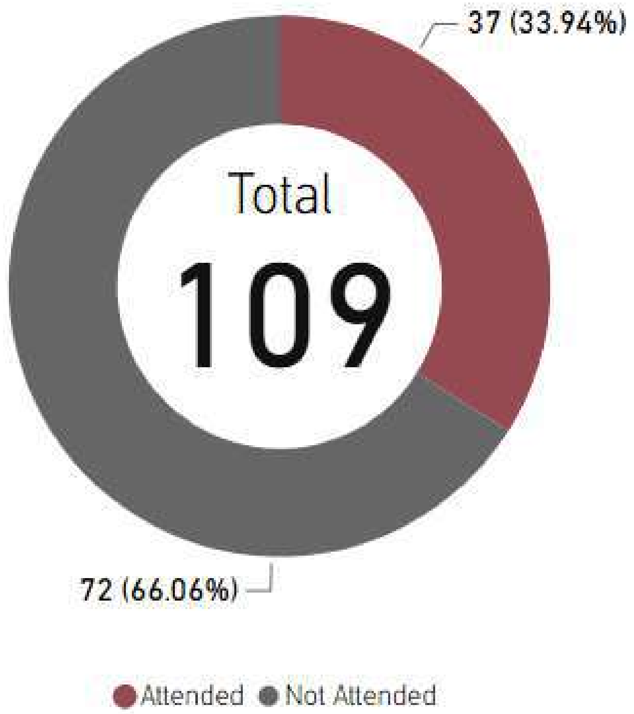


Figure 30. The number of Hospital AFA calls in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

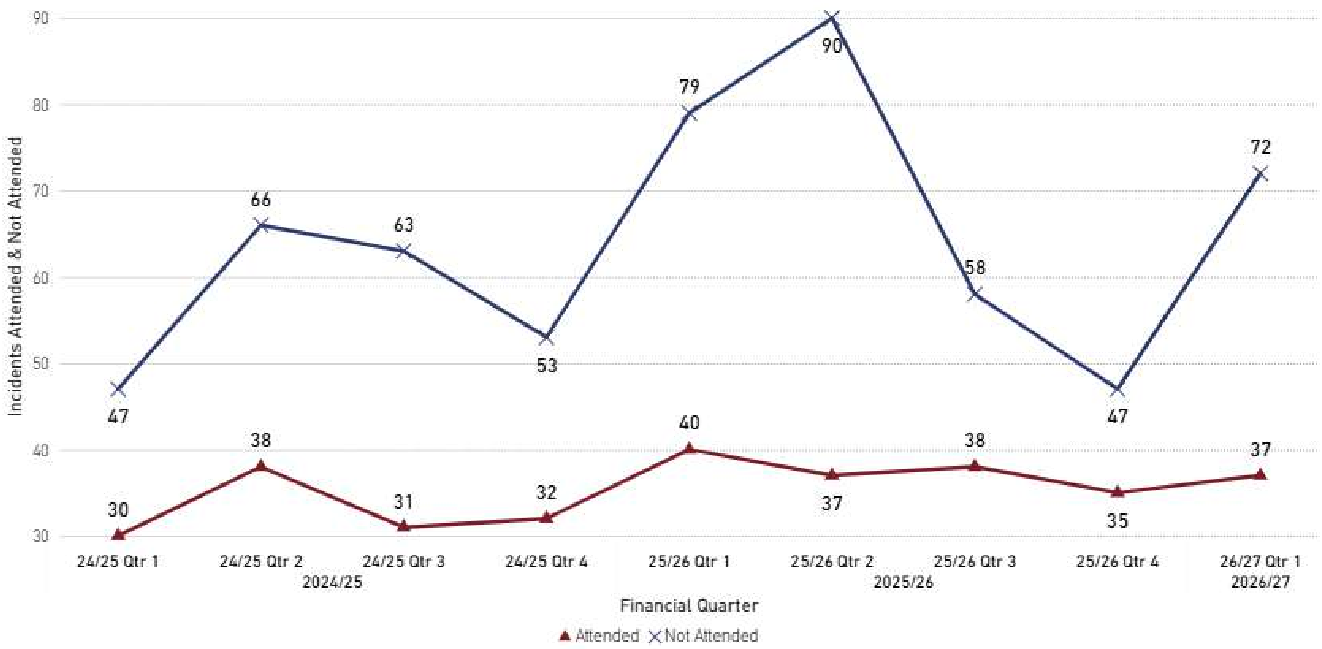


Figure 31. The number of Hospital AFA calls in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 2 financial years.

Actions taken to date – Hospitals:

The number of incidents attended at BCUHB premises remained low during Quarter 1, reflecting the continued collaborative approach between NWFRS and BCUHB to strengthen fire safety arrangements across the health estate.

As part of this work, NWFRS has introduced a cyclical audit programme focused on higher-risk sites, supported by a comprehensive audit framework covering regulatory compliance, operational assurance, and key fire safety activities such as testing, drills and maintenance. The Central area audit was completed at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd in June 2026, with a largely satisfactory outcome. The final audit of the current cycle is scheduled for Quarter 3 2026/27 at Wrexham Maelor Hospital

Joint working has also continued in support of significant estate developments, including the expansion of Llandudno General Hospital and the replacement of systems at Wrexham Maelor Hospital. In addition, discussions are underway regarding the delivery of a Health Technical Memoranda (HTM) training programme later in the year, which would further strengthen the Service's capacity to undertake audits across BCUHB sites.

12 HMP Berwyn

A total of **10** primary fires were attended at HMP Berwyn during Quarter 1 2026/27, compared with 5 in Quarter 4 2025/26. Despite this increase, the number recorded remained substantially lower than that seen prior to Quarter 2 2025/26, coinciding with the introduction of tamper-proof vapes at the prison.

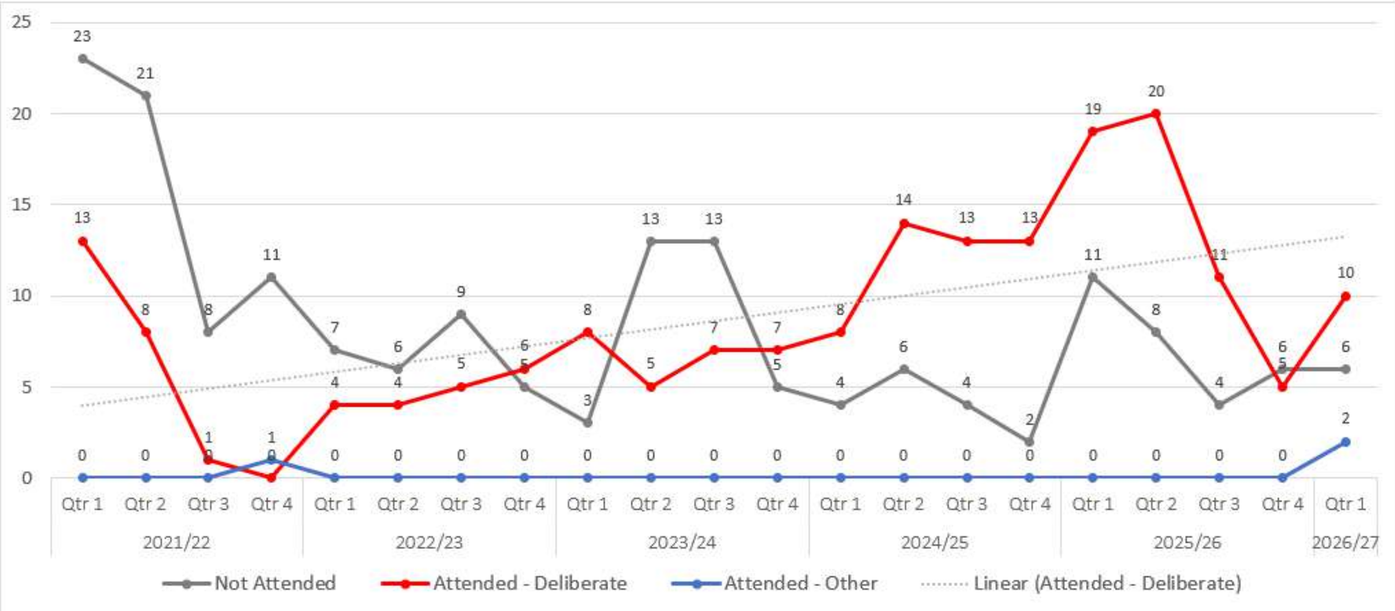


Figure 32. The number of primary fires at HMP Berwyn in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 5 financial years.

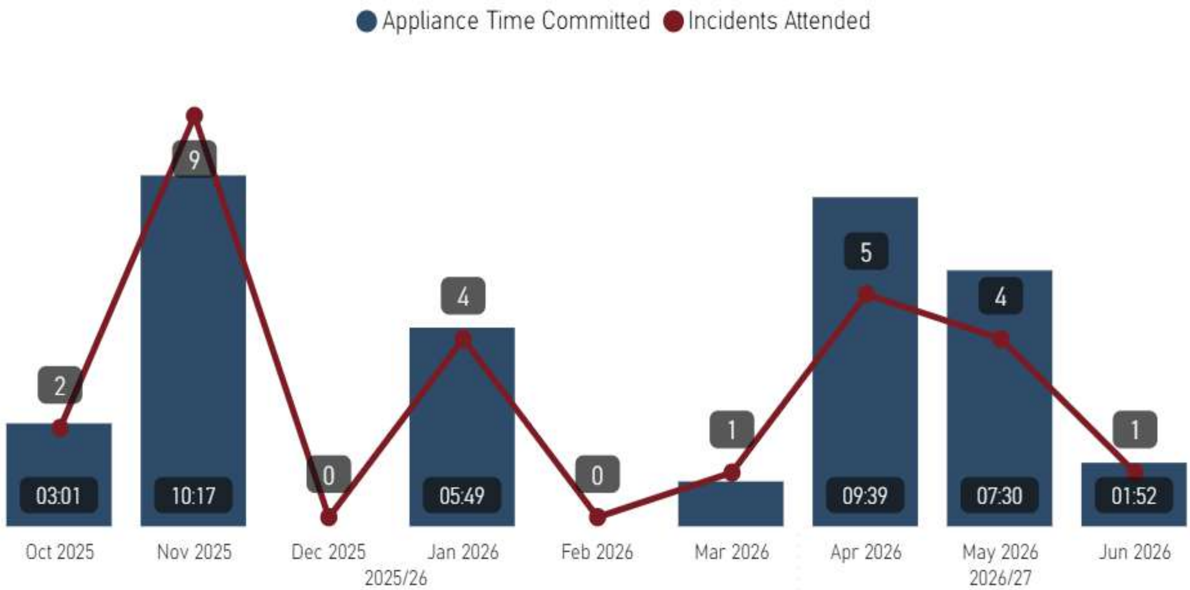


Figure 33. The number of deliberate primary fire incidents attended with appliance time committed (HH:MM) during Q1 (April – June) during the financial year 2026/27 and the previous 2 Quarters.

Actions taken to date – HMP Berwyn

Incident volumes at HMP Berwyn continue to fluctuate, reflecting the changing nature of fire-setting behaviours and the challenges associated with preventing the misuse of everyday items as ignition sources. Following the introduction of revised vape products, which initially contributed to a reduction in incidents, individuals have continued to adapt their methods, requiring ongoing monitoring and partnership working.

Emerging risks have been identified and shared with the relevant manufacturers, who are taking steps to further strengthen product safety features. NWFRS continues to work closely with HMP Berwyn and other partners to identify emerging trends, assess risks, and adapt prevention and response arrangements where required.

Following an incident in Quarter 4 2025/26 in an area outside the usual accommodation environment, a multi-agency review was undertaken to consider lessons learned and ensure that operational arrangements remain effective across all areas of the site. This collaborative approach resulted in planned actions to further strengthen preparedness and support operational response to less typical incident scenarios.

Our Response Principle

13 RDS Station Availability

The table below provides an overview of average appliance availability at Retained Duty System (RDS) stations between 06:00 and 18:00. Availability is shown by month and is presented separately for weekdays and weekends/bank holidays to provide additional context on availability patterns across the reporting period.

The figures relate to RDS stations that do not operate alongside wholetime or day-crewed duty systems.

Day/Month	Apr	May	Jun	Q1 2026/27
Weekday	6	6	6	**6**
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	12	11	9	**11**
Overall Average	8	8	7	**7**

Please note that numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The below table reflects the number of RDS starters and leavers during Quarter 1 of 2026/27 compared to the year 2025/26.

The starters, leavers and headcount figures are reported using established workforce measures and are provided for context. Due to differences in how these measures are calculated, the net number of starters and leavers may not equal the change in headcount reported between periods.

Year	Starters	Leavers	Position Headcount at Period End	Headcount (single role only)
Apr 2025 – Mar 2026	88	71	512	427
Apr 2026 – Jun 2026	11	16	526	441
+/-			14	14

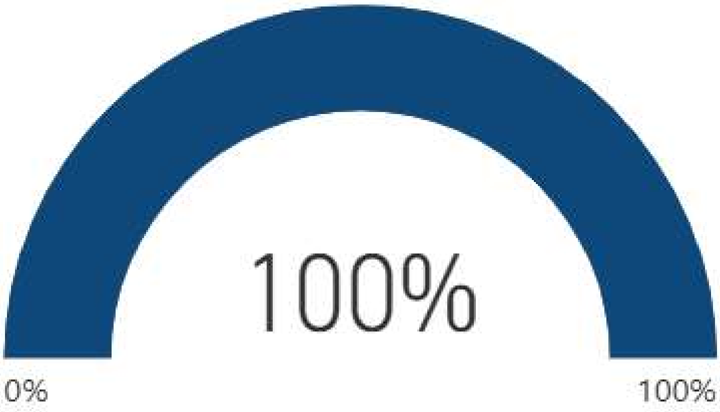
Starters – the number of RDS starters from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts.

Leavers - the number of RDS leavers from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts, or migrations to the WDS.

Position Headcount at Quarter End – the number of RDS positions that are filled, including those who have more than one role.

Headcount (single role only) – the number of individuals who are on the RDS only i.e., those who do not have two roles in the Service.

14 Planned 18 Pump Availability



Shift	Days min. achieved	Days min. missed
Weekday	61	0
Non-Weekday	30	0
Total	**91**	**0**

Figure 34. The percentage of days where there was a minimum of 18 pumps available during the hours of 06:00 – 18:00, including a breakdown of the number of days in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

During Quarter 1 of 2026/27 we have maintained a minimum of 18 available pumps during the daytime (06:00 – 18:00) across the entire region. This ensures that sufficient operational coverage was maintained throughout the Service, with all areas within the 16 Grouping Plan appropriately covered.

Year	% Met	Number of days missed
2021/22	99.97%	1
2022/23	99.93%	1
2023/24	99.53%	11
2024/25	99.90%	2
2025/26	99.93%	2
2026/27	100.00%	0

Figure 35. The percentage of days where there was a minimum of 18 pumps available during the hours of 06:00 – 18:00, including a breakdown of the number of days where the minimum 18 pump availability was missed per financial year from 2021/22 – 2026/27.

As seen in figure 35 the Service has kept the minimum of 18 available pumps during the daytime (06:00 – 18:00) across the entire region over 99% of the time for the past 5 financial years. It should be noted that pump availability is measured and reported on an hourly basis. Consequently, a day is recorded as missed if pump availability falls below 18 during any single hour. In some cases, this may overstate the duration of reduced availability, as an hour may be classified as missed even where a pump was unavailable for only a short period within that hour (for example, 10 minutes).

15 Emerging Technologies

As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

- Electric Vehicles
- Wind Farms
- Devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries

As many of these technologies are not currently captured within the Home Office's Incident Recording System (IRS), key word searches are conducted on incident logs in order to find the relevant incidents. Following a machinery of government transfer whereby the responsibility for Fire shifted from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), work is currently being undertaken by MHCLG and FRSs across the UK to integrate these technologies into the new incident recording system known as the Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP). Incidents recorded before the implementation of FaRDaP will still need to be extracted using key word searches.

The following summary shows the number of incidents attended during the first Quarter of 2026/27, where a specific emerging technology was stated in the incident logs. This includes SSCs, however, this excludes deliberate fires.

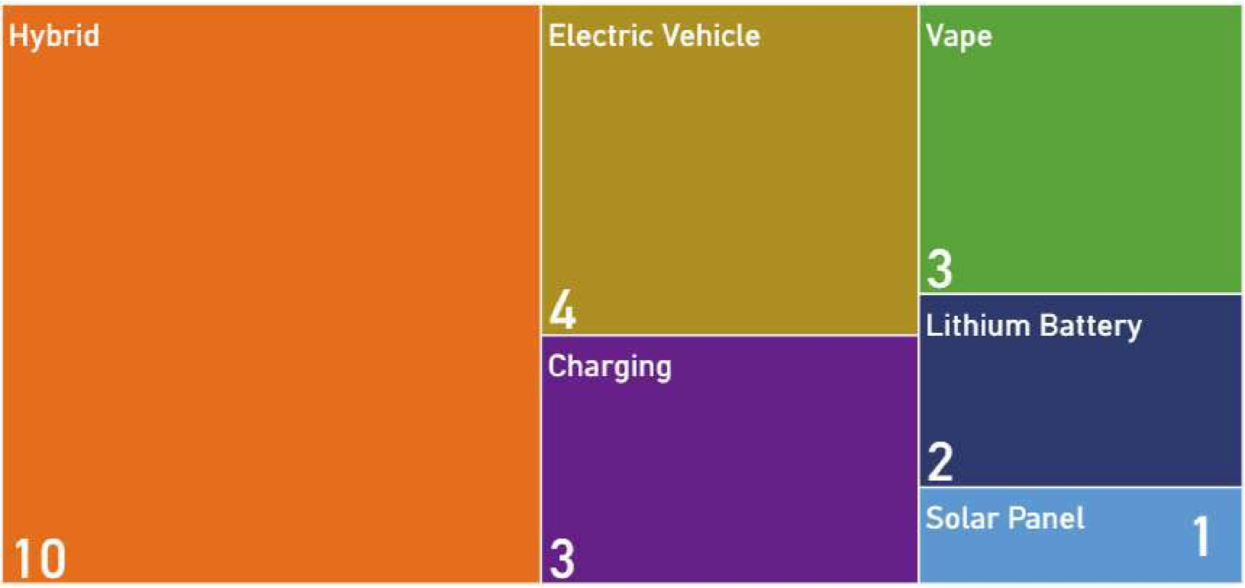


Figure 36. The number of incidents with involvement of emerging technologies, excluding deliberate fires, in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

Although electric and hybrid vehicles feature prominently within the incidents recorded, the majority were non-fire related incidents, as shown in the following chart.

N.B. In some cases, the cause has been assumed rather than confirmed due to the nature of the incident.

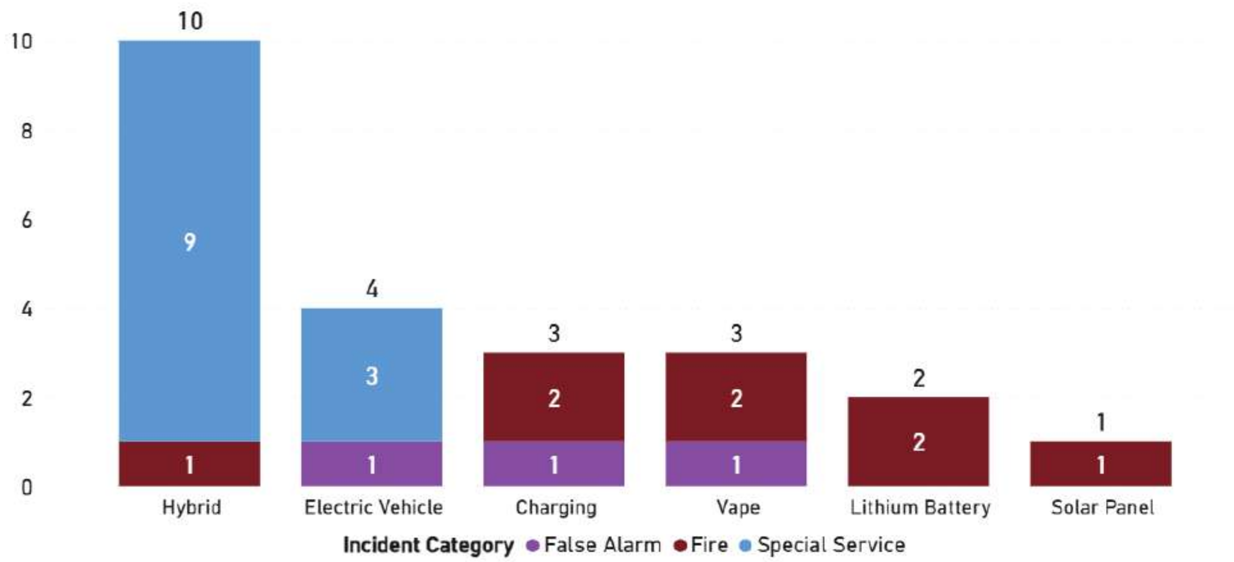


Figure 37. The number of incidents with involvement of emerging technologies, split by incident category in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27.

Our Environment Principle

16 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

152 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded in Quarter 1 of 2026/27, a 40% decrease from the **254** recorded during the same reporting period in the previous year.

Figure 38. The number of grassland, woodland and crop fires in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 9 financial years.

17 Wildfires

The total number of wildfires reported in Quarter 1 of 2026/27 has reduced by 88% (from **25** to **3**) in the same reporting period in the previous year. This is also a reduction from **5** reported in Quarter 4 of 2025/26.

It should be noted that the definition and operational parameters used to classify wildfires have evolved over the period presented. To ensure consistency and enable meaningful comparison over time, the figures shown in this report have been calculated in line with the current definition of a wildfire, with historic data retrospectively re-analysed and aligned to these parameters.

Figure 39. The number of wildfires in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 9 financial years.

18 Flooding and Water Rescue

Flooding incidents continued to reduce during Quarter 1 of 2026/27, consistent with the trend seen in the same period last year. In contrast, water rescue incidents have increased steadily across Quarter 1 periods over the past five years, with 2026/27 recording the highest first-Quarter total in that period.

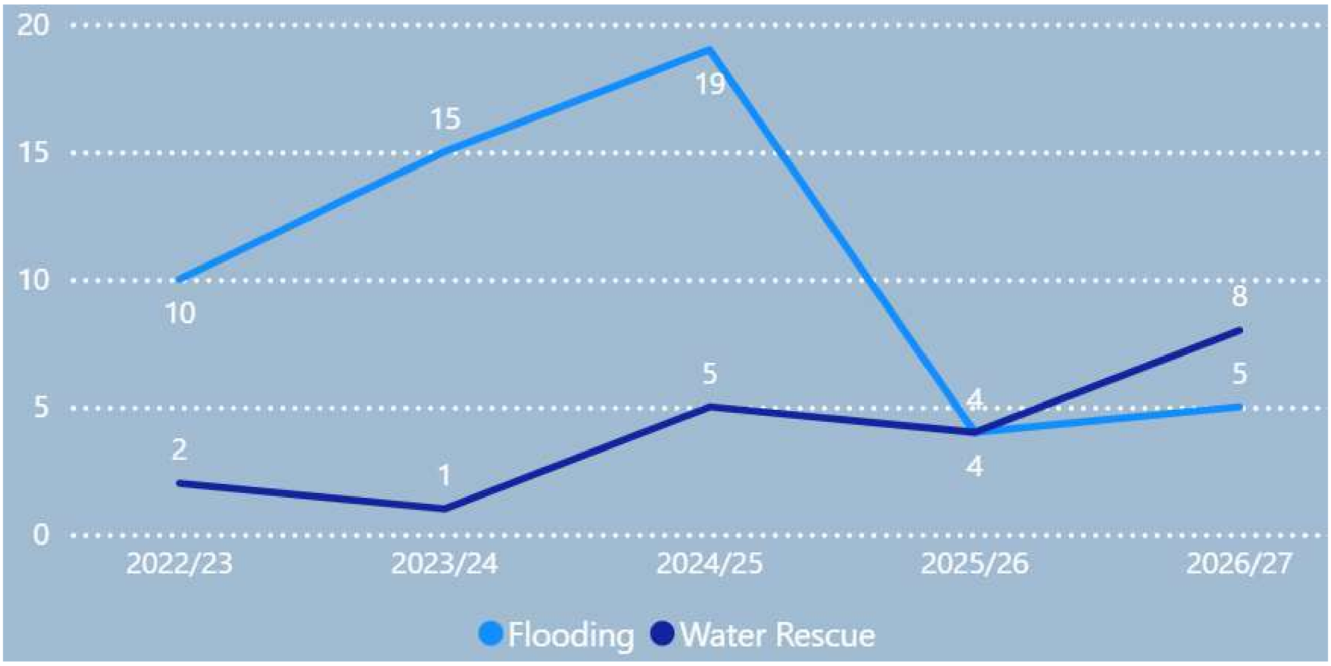


Figure 40. The number of flooding and water rescue incidents in Q1 (April - June) during financial year 2026/27 and the previous 4 financial years.

Water Safety Activity:

Water Safety Pilot Scheme

The NWFRS, Swim Wales and Ffit Cymru Water Safety Pilot continued to develop during Quarter 1 2026/27, with a number of sessions delivered across Conwy County. Feedback from participating schools and partner organisations has been positive, demonstrating the value of the programme in raising awareness of water safety among children and young people.

Building on this progress, plans are in place to extend delivery to Anglesey and Wrexham, increasing access to the programme across North Wales. Work is also underway to engage with a broader range of schools to help ensure water safety education reaches communities with varying levels of exposure to aquatic environments.

To support future expansion, additional NWFRS staff have been recruited to form a second cohort of water safety tutors. Training is scheduled for September 2026 and will further increase the Service's capacity to deliver water safety education and prevention activity across the region.

Be Water Aware Campaign
As part of the Be Water Aware campaign, NWFRS delivered a water safety engagement event at Betws-y-Coed during Quarter 1. Working alongside local crews and partners, personnel engaged with approximately 200 members of the public near Pont-y-Pair, helping to raise awareness of water safety and promote safe enjoyment of local waterways

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) Conference
NWFRS and Swim Wales have been invited to jointly present at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Conference in October 2026. The presentation will showcase the collaborative approach taken by both organisations to deliver water safety education and prevention activity, while sharing learning and good practice with partners from across the UK.

DangerPoint
Work continues with DangerPoint to strengthen the delivery of water safety education and awareness activities. As part of this collaboration, NWFRS has supported the introduction of a bespoke water flume, providing an engaging and practical way of demonstrating the hazards associated with inland water environments.
DangerPoint staff have also received training to support the effective use of the equipment and the delivery of key water safety messages. This will help enhance educational opportunities for visitors and further strengthen the reach and impact of water safety prevention activity across North Wales.

Water Safety Wales
NWFRS continues to play an active role in Water Safety Wales, working with partners across Wales to support the development and delivery of evidence-based water safety initiatives. During Quarter 1, progress was made towards establishing a Water Safety Partnership in Wrexham, helping to strengthen local collaboration and support a coordinated approach to water safety prevention activity across the county.
NWFRS continues to work with Water Safety Wales and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to strengthen the evidence base for

drowning prevention activity across Wales. During Quarter 1, the Service contributed to work exploring the potential introduction of a structured Drowning Incident Review process, helping to identify opportunities for learning, support informed decision-making, and further enhance future water safety strategies.

Glossary

Fires	All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.
Primary Fires	These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc. Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involved casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.
Secondary Fires	Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires. Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances. Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc.
Chimney Fires	These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself. Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.
Special Service Incidents	These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include: a) Local emergencies e.g., flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc; b) Major disasters; c) Domestic incidents e.g., water leaks, persons locked in or out etc; d) Prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.
False Alarm (general guidance)	Where the FRS attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed. Note: if the appliance is ‘turned around’ by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having been attended and does not need to be reported.
False Alarms - Malicious	These are calls made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

False Alarms – Good Intent	These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would attend a fire or special service incident.
False Alarms - AFA	These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm apparatus or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the FRS as part of a standing arrangement, i.e., with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.
Building - Dwellings	A property that is a place of residence, i.e., occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostel and residential non-permanent structures.
Building - Non-Residential	Properties such as hospitals, offices, shops, factories, warehouses, restaurants, cinemas, public buildings, religious buildings, agricultural buildings, railway stations, sheds, prisons.
Building - Other Residential	Properties such as hotels, hotels and residential institutions B&Bs, Nursing/care homes, student halls of residence.
Vehicle (Road and Other Transport)	Road vehicle, rail vehicle, aircraft, boat.
Outdoor	Fields, grassland, woodland, refuse containers, post boxes.
Wildfires	A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by 4 or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for 6 hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.
Short Term Sickness (STS)	Absences 27 calendar days and under.
Long Term Sickness (LTS)	Absences 28 calendar days and over.

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn Gymraeg **Agenda Item 12**

Report to	**Executive Panel**
Date	**21 September 2026**
Lead Officer	**Helen MacArthur, ACFO**
Contact Officer	**Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement**
Subject	**Annual Statement of Accounts 2025/26**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To present the audited Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 and the Audit Wales ISA 260 Audit of Accounts Report for review and approval, following the delegation provided by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 20 July 2026. The report also presents the findings of the Auditor General for Wales, who intends to issue an unqualified audit opinion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 The draft Statement of Accounts were submitted to Audit Wales on the 28 May 2026. Audit Wales completed its audit and intends to issue an unqualified audit opinion following approval of the accounts and signing of the Letter of Representation.

3 On 20 July 2026, the Fire and Rescue Authority delegated authority to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel to approve the final audited Statement of Accounts following completion of the external audit process.

4 The Audit Wales ISA 260 report is attached at Appendix 2. A small number of disclosure and presentational amendments have been incorporated into the final Statement of Accounts, together with one uncorrected misstatement (£90k) relating to the timing of expenditure recognition. Audit Wales has not identified any significant governance or financial reporting concerns.

5 Under the revised arrangements agreed by Welsh Government, the audited Statement of Accounts must be approved by 30 September 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6 It is recommended that Members:

i) Note the audited outturn position and performance as detailed within the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts (Appendix 1);
ii) Note the report of the Auditor General for Wales which confirms an unqualified audit opinion (Appendix 2);
iii) Endorse the proposed letter of representation (Appendix 2); and
iv) Confirm the recommendation of approval of the final audited 2025/26 Statement of Accounts.

CONSIDERATION BY OTHER COMMITTEES

7 The unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 was presented to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel on 15 June 2026 and to the Fire and Rescue Authority on 20 July 2026. The Fire and Rescue Authority subsequently delegated authority to approve the final audited accounts to the Executive Panel, following scrutiny by the Audit Committee. This delegation is conditional on there not being any material amendments arising from the audit process.

BACKGROUND

8 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require the Authority to prepare and publish a statement of accounts on an annual basis. The pre-Covid timescales prescribed within the Regulations require a draft statement of accounts to be issued by 31 May, with an audit deadline of 31 July each year.

9 The Welsh Government, following consultation with the Society of Welsh Treasurers and Audit Wales, confirmed that the draft statement of accounts for 2025/26 should be prepared no later than 30 June 2026, and that the statement of accounts should be audited by the 30 September 2026.

10 The draft Statement of Accounts were certified by the Authority's Treasurer on 28 May 2026 and presented to Audit Wales. The draft statement of accounts have been subject to external audit and appendix 1 contain the final audited version.

INFORMATION

AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

11 The Auditor General for Wales is responsible for providing an opinion on whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2026.

12 In performing the audit work, Audit Wales does not seek to provide absolute assurance but considers whether there are any material issues which may result in a reader of the accounts being misled. When an error or misstatement is identified Audit Wales will consider whether an amendment is required.

13 The Auditor General for Wales intends to issue an unqualified audit opinion, confirming that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the Authority's financial position and have been properly prepared in accordance with the relevant legislative and accounting standards. The full audit report is included at Appendix 2, and the following matters are highlighted.

14 During the audit of the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts, Audit Wales identified a small number of amendments which were agreed with management and incorporated into the final Statement of Accounts. Details of these amendments are set out in the accompanying Audit Wales ISA 260 report.

15 One uncorrected misstatement was identified during the audit, relating to prepayment of invoices totalling £90k that should have been charged to 2025/26, although the expenditure will be incurred in 2026/27. This is not considered to be a material misstatement.

16 Matters raised by the audit team were addressed and resolved in collaboration with officers, resulting in a set of financial statements that fully comply with the applicable accounting standards.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	This report links to the Authority's long-term well-being objectives. Funding for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) benefits the communities of North Wales and ensures there is sufficient investment in infrastructure to enable the service to provide emergency responses and prevention work well in to the future.
Budget	Budget is set annually in accordance with the proposed service delivery which includes emergency response and prevention work.
Legal	It is a legal requirement that the Authority produces the Statement of Accounts in accordance with the prescribed standards.
Staffing	Effective financial management supports the long-term workforce strategy to ensure that the Authority can discharge its responsibilities.
Equalities/ Human Rights/Welsh Language	None
Risks and Uncertainties	Income and expenditure are closely monitored to ensure that deviations from the approved budget are properly identified and reported to Members.

Statement of Accounts

2025-2026

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS | PAGE

The maintenance and integrity of the Authority's website is the responsibility of the Authority; the work carried out by auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and accordingly auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website.

Narrative Report

The Statement of Accounts has been put together following the rules set by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This report is meant to help people, including the public, North Wales residents, Fire and Rescue Authority Members, partners, and anyone else interested to:

- Understand the Fire and Rescue Authority's financial position and how much money was spent in 2025/26;
- Feel confident that the Authority has used public money properly and recorded it correctly; and
- Be reassured that the Authority's finances are strong and well-managed.

The accounts follow CIPFA standards, and we have tried to make the information as simple and clear as possible. However, because North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is a large organisation, some parts of the accounts are still technical and complicated.

The Statement of Accounts includes the core financial statements, which are: -

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) – This shows how much it cost to run our services this year, based on normal accounting rules. It does not show the amount paid for by taxes.

Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) – This shows the same information as the CIES but also explains which accounting adjustments are removed in note 7 so that taxpayers do not fund them.

The Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) –This shows how the Authority's reserves (savings and other financial balances) changed during the year. It separates reserves into "usable" (those we can spend) and "unusable" (those we cannot spend). It also shows the true cost of running the service and how we use different reserves to cover those costs.

The Balance Sheet – This shows what the Authority owns (assets) and what it owes (liabilities) on the date of the Balance Sheet. The difference between these is the Authority's net assets, which match the total value of its reserves.

The Cash Flow Statement – This shows how the Authority's cash has moved in and out over the year.

The notes to the account explain how the financial statements were prepared, the accounting rules used, and extra information that helps make the accounts easier to understand.

Foreword from the Chair

As Chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (NWFRS), I am pleased to share the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts. Despite ongoing financial pressures, I am proud of how the Service, with the support of the Authority, has continued to protect our communities while staying in a stable financial position.

The Authority remains committed to ensuring a fire and rescue service that works well and keeps people safe. Our goal is to make North Wales a safe place to live, work and visit. To do this, we must not only balance this year's budget but also plan ahead so we can stay strong in the future. A key part of this plan is investing in the buildings, vehicles, and equipment that will support the Service and our communities for many years.

Although the financial outlook for the future is challenging, I am confident that our solid financial position will help us deal with these difficulties.

Councillor Dylan Rees,

Chair of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Introduction from Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer

This Narrative Statement is designed to help readers understand the Fire and Rescue Authority, the environment in which it operates, and the information included in the Statement of Accounts.

Along with financial details, the Narrative Statement also explains our activities, long-term plans, and performance results. This gives readers a clearer picture of the wider work of the Authority and the context in which it operates.

The accounts themselves can be complex, but I encourage you to review them along with this Narrative Statement. Together, they provide a full summary of the financial year and the Authority's financial position as of 31 March 2026.

If you need more information or have questions, contact details are included in the Narrative Statement.

Dawn Docx,

Chief Fire Officer

Introduction to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

These accounts cover the year to 31 March 2026 for the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority. The Authority covers a geographic area of 2,400 square miles with an estimated population of approximately 700,000 people. There are 44 fire stations in North Wales – 8 full-time and 36 on-call stations.

The Authority is committed to community safety and fire prevention, alongside emergency response. We work with local schools, businesses, and community groups to teach people about safety and share important messages.

The Authority is made up of 28 elected councillors from the six unitary authorities of North Wales. The population of the constituent Council's area determines the number of representatives. More information about the Authority, its members and responsibilities can be found on the Fire Authority pages of our website.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is led by a Chief Fire Officer and the Service Leadership Team. This includes Senior Officers and Managers who lead the departments that support our key operational and corporate functions.

Our principles

At NWFRS, we are guided by our principles that shape our actions and decisions. These are:

These principles help us deliver high-quality services and maintain the trust and safety of the communities we serve.

About Our Service Area

Resources

44 fire stations

54 front line fire appliances

41 special appliances including rescue boats and aerial ladder platforms

979 staff of which **30%** are fluent welsh speakers

Prevention and Protection activities

19,376 safe and well checks completed

530 business audits conducted

64 safety talks with **4,645** children and young people

20 phoenix courses with **172** participants completing the programme

Responding activities

15,972 emergency calls handled

Attended **6,611** emergency incidents

2,040 fires attended of which **35** were wildfires

3,209 false alarms

Governance and Risk Management

During the financial year 2025/26, the Service continued to strengthen its governance and risk management arrangements to support transparent, accountable and effective decision making.

Summary of Key Risks and Uncertainties

The Service operates in a complex and evolving risk environment. The principal risks and uncertainties identified during the year included:

Capital Investment in training facilities – Uncertainty in future capital funding presents a risk that training and facilities may become unfit-for-purpose if sufficient investment is not available to maintain and improve the estate.

Cyber security and information resilience – The Service continues to face increased risk arising from the evolving cyber-threat landscape.

Pensions administration and regulatory complexity – Complex pension regulations and ongoing legal challenges create a risk that statutory deadlines may not be met.

Workforce capacity and operational availability - Challenges in recruiting and retaining sufficient staff, particularly in rural areas, present a risk to maintaining appliance availability and operational resilience.

Critical systems – The Service continues to manage risks associated with the maintenance and continuity of critical systems.

Risk Management and Control

Risk management is embedded within the Service's strategic planning, decision-making and performance management processes. Key risks are recorded in the corporate risk register and are regularly reviewed by the Service Leadership Team and relevant committees, with mitigating actions clearly identified, monitored and updated to ensure risks remain within the Service's risk appetite.

NWFRS assesses its principal risks and uncertainties, including financial risks, through the five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and the Annual Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP). Directorate-level annual planning aligns with the CRMP and CRMIP, translating priorities into departmental objectives. Where these objectives give rise to strategic risks, they are recorded on the Strategic Risk Register alongside associated business cases.

The Strategic Risk Committee operates under agreed terms of reference and in accordance with the Service's Risk Management Strategy. The Committee meets quarterly to review strategic risks and oversee mitigation activity. Independent assurance on the effectiveness of risk management, governance and internal control arrangements is provided through internal and external audit.

Key Governance Developments

During the year, the Service continued to strengthen its governance arrangements, including:

Governance structure review – continued refinement of committee structures and roles to provide clearer accountability and oversight.

Integration of risk into decision making – further embedding risk assessment into business planning, reporting and strategic decisions.

Internal audit – delivery of the third year of the three year internal audit plan, providing assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls and compliance with policies and procedures.

Future Priorities

Looking ahead, the Service will continue to strengthen its governance and risk management arrangements in response to an evolving operational, regulatory and organisational landscape.

Priorities for the year ahead include developing governance capability through ongoing training and development for Members and officers, alongside enhanced performance and risk reporting to support timely, evidence-based oversight of strategic risks and objectives.

The Authority will also continue to prepare for and respond to Fire and Rescue Service Governance Reform. Work will focus on ensuring that governance arrangements remain robust, transparent and adaptable, while supporting operational effectiveness and public confidence throughout any transition.

Alongside the risks facing the organisation, the Service will continue to pursue opportunities to improve resilience, efficiency and service delivery. This includes strengthening collaboration with partners, investing in workforce development, making effective use of digital and data-driven solutions, and maintaining a strong focus on prevention and community safety to manage future demand and risk.

Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement, which accompanies the financial statements, provides a detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the Service's governance framework during the year. It identifies key governance related risks and sets out the actions taken, and planned, to address areas for improvement.

Service Leadership Team

The Service Leadership Team (SLT) comprises the Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officers, Area Managers and Heads of Department, providing a comprehensive leadership framework to oversee governance, risk management and operational delivery.

Operating Model

The Fire Authority's operating model explains how we work to keep our communities safe. It shows how we use our resources, manage our services, and reach our goals.

Our main services include:

- **Emergency Response:** Quickly and effectively responding to fires, special service calls, and other incidents.
- **Prevention and Protection:** Promotion and education of fire safety, completing inspections, and enforcing rules to reduce risk.
- **Community Engagement:** Working with residents, businesses, and local groups to promote safety and preparedness.

We regularly check and adjust how we use our resources to make sure we are meeting our goals efficiently. This includes reviewing our budget, staffing, and equipment needs, as well as assessing our performance and impact.

Below is a map of all our facilities across North Wales.

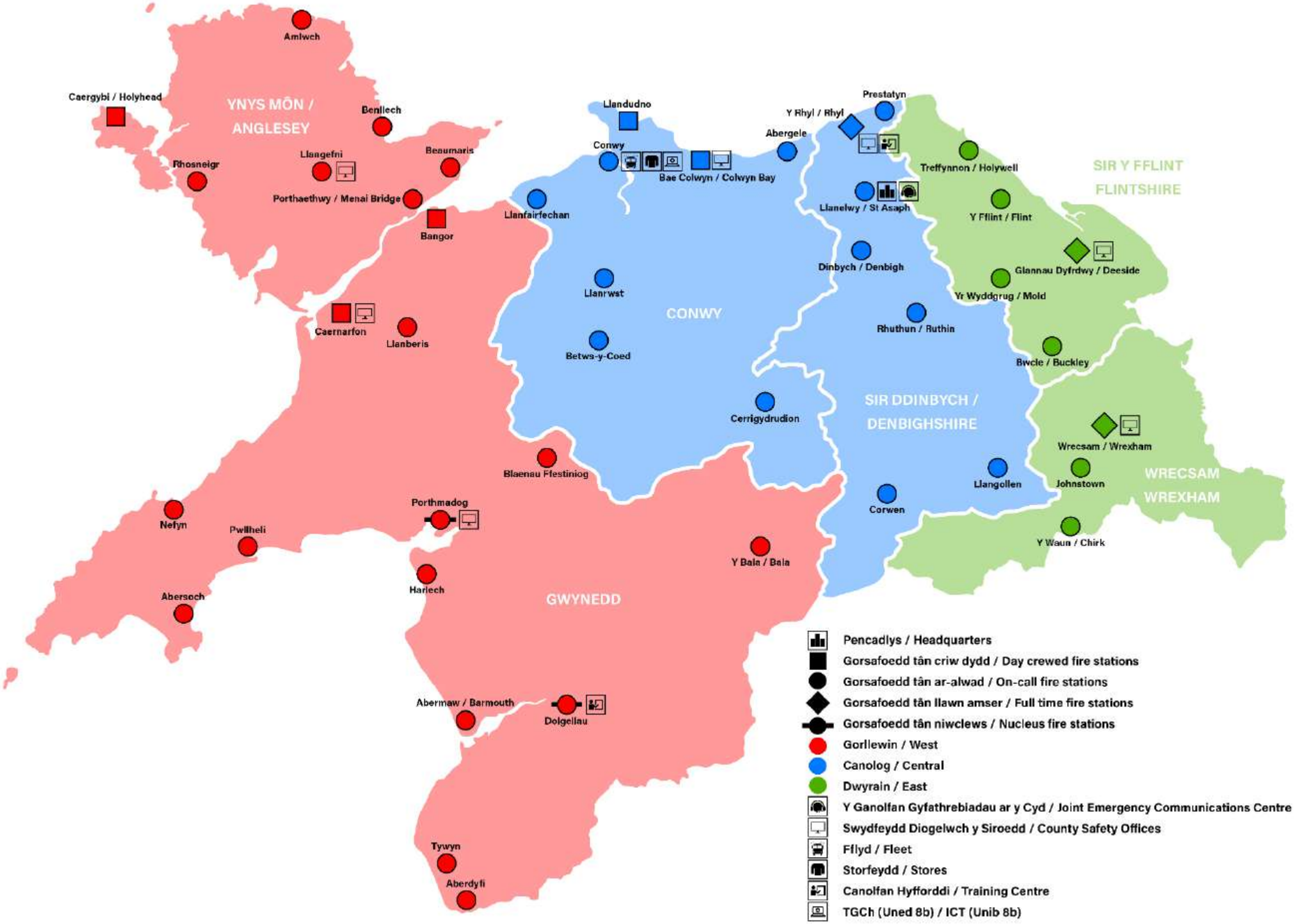
Emergency Cover Review (ECR)

The Emergency Cover Review has informed the development of a revised approach to sustaining emergency cover across North Wales, particularly in rural areas. This work has focused on improving resilience, predictability of appliance availability and the long-term sustainability of emergency response within existing financial and workforce constraints.

As a result, a formal Collective Agreement has been agreed between the Chief Fire Officer and the Fire Brigades Union. The Collective Agreement sets out the overarching principles and governance arrangements for a package of operational and workforce changes, including revised crewing arrangements at selected stations.

Implementation of the Collective Agreement is now underway, supported by defined workstreams and oversight arrangements. Progress continues to be monitored to assess its operational, workforce and financial impacts.

NWFRS Facilities/Station Map



Community Risk Management Plan

The Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29 (CRMP), explains how the Service identifies and manages risks across North Wales, outlining the key risks facing our communities and setting out how we will address them—while continuing to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies.

To support the CRMP, we produce annual Community Risk Management Implementation Plans. These implementation plans detail the specific actions we will take each year to achieve our goals and keep our communities safe. The plans also include well-being and improvement objectives, in line with Welsh legislation.

During 2025-26 we held a public consultation, including several engagement events, to gain feedback on our proposed Community Risk Management Implementation Plan for 2026-27. All feedback received has been given consideration in line with Gunning Principles, and the approved plan will be available on our website.

Annual Performance

NWFRA's Annual Performance Assessment, published in October 2025, marked the first year of the five-year Corporate Risk Management Plan. It reviewed performance against annual objectives and reflected on achievements across the plan's lifespan.

In addition to reporting on statutory and sector-wide performance indicators, the report assessed progress against improvement and well-being objectives. These included enhancing community safety and resilience, improving environmental sustainability, and embedding social value in procurement.

The annual performance assessment also highlighted the Authority's commitment to workforce development, stakeholder engagement, and operational efficiency.

The Annual Performance Assessment can be accessed here.

Organisational Culture and Improvement

During 2025/26, the Service continued to act on the findings of the Independent Cultural Review carried out by Crest Advisory in February 2025. The focus has moved from planning changes to putting them into practice and making sure they become part of everyday ways of working. Culture Champions have been appointed to encourage positive behaviour, support open conversations, and help staff engage with the culture improvement programme.

The Culture Improvement Plan has been updated during 2025/26 to reflect current priorities and feedback from staff. Progress is tracked through clear actions and reported through existing governance arrangements.

Oversight is provided by the Cultural Improvement Board, which includes senior leaders, the Chair of the Authority, the EDI Member Champion and a Welsh Government representative. This ensures progress and risks are properly monitored and challenged.

The Service continues to work closely with Welsh Government and partners to support long-term cultural change and remains committed to providing a safe, inclusive and values-led workplace that supports high-quality public services.

Hwb Awen

The Authority made further progress during the year on the development of Hwb Awen, the proposed training centre. Following approval of the Strategic Outline Case in October 2024, work moved into early design stages and technical preparation to support the Outline Business Case.

Initial RIBA design stages focused on operational needs, space requirements and how different areas of the site would work together which helped shape an early design brief.

Site investigations and environmental checks were carried out during the year, including ecological and biodiversity surveys. This work supported site feasibility, identified constraints and ensured environmental and sustainability requirements were considered from an early stage.

Clear governance arrangements remain in place, with the project sponsored by an Assistant Chief Fire Officer and supported by a dedicated project team. Engagement with internal and external stakeholders has continued to ensure proposals reflect operational needs, workforce considerations and recognised good practice.

Hwb Awen remains a key part of the Authority’s long-term strategy and is central to delivering the Community Risk Management Plan 2024–2029.


TÂN FIRE

TAN FIRE


Sustainability and climate change

In 2025/26, the Authority worked to implement the detailed decarbonisation plans for Fleet, Heating, Power and Procurement as set out in its Environmental Strategy (2023–2030). The Environment and Sustainability Working Group has monitored the Service's progress towards the Net Zero 2030 target.

The pilot installation of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a diesel alternative has continued at Deeside Fire Station. Plans are in place to install HVO tanks and dispensing equipment at twenty sites by 2030. This should mitigate nearly half of the Service's direct carbon emissions.

Progress continued on a bespoke Environmental Management System aligned with ISO 14001, aimed at improving environmental performance through better resource use and waste reduction. Implementation is expected to begin in 2026/27.

A comprehensive mechanical and electrical estate condition survey has been undertaken, to inform planning around proactive replacement of aged or inefficient heating systems.

A standard heating system specification has been developed for low-occupancy fire stations which will allow us to install zero-carbon heating systems at a significantly lower cost per site.

Grant funding was secured to support decarbonisation initiatives, including up to 90% of the cost of EV charging infrastructure installation and associated decarbonisation works, alongside fixed contributions towards the purchase of electric vehicles. A total of £204k was awarded through the Welsh Government Energy Service.

Significant partnership work has taken place, with the Service supporting the development of a regional Climate Change Risk Assessment for Public Service Board partners.

The Authority published its three-yearly Biodiversity Report and Action Plan, detailing the progress made to date and an ambitious scheme of work proposed for the period to 2028.

Financial Performance

The Authority remains committed to delivering high-quality fire prevention, protection, and emergency response services across its communities. During 2025/26, the Authority continued to operate within a challenging financial environment, characterised by ongoing inflationary pressures, workforce cost increases, and continued uncertainty across the wider public sector funding landscape.

To support financial sustainability, Members reaffirmed the Medium-Term Resource Strategy for 2026-30 and approved increased contributions from the constituent authorities for 2025/26 of 5.15% once adjusted for SCAPE and Employer National Insurance increases. This was supported by the planned and prudent use of earmarked reserves and non-recurring measures to ensure that operational effectiveness and community safety were maintained while longer-term cost pressures continue to be addressed.

Workforce pressures remained a key area of focus during the year, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention in specialist and retained roles. Progress continued in implementing agreed workforce recommendations and aligning local arrangements with national discussions on pay, terms and conditions. Further development work was also undertaken during the year on the revised Emergency Cover model, building on the outcomes of the 2023 public consultation and subsequent engagement with stakeholders.

Despite these ongoing pressures, the Authority maintained a stable financial position throughout 2025/26 through robust budget monitoring, vacancy management, and in-year income generation. Looking ahead, the Authority continues to prioritise the active management of pay, pension and non-pay inflation, while ensuring that financial decisions remain aligned to operational resilience, risk management, and the delivery of strategic objectives.

Revenue Performance

The Authority reported a surplus of £121k for 2025/26 after applying statutory accounting adjustments and transfers to reserves. This compares to an outturn forecast of £134k at the end of March. The surplus has been transferred to the General Fund balance, increasing overall reserves.

Usable reserves increased by £904k during the year, bringing the total to £11,783k. These reserves have been set aside to support ongoing service requirements, including anticipated insurance claims and the replacement of fire kit. It is anticipated that reserve levels will reduce in future years as these commitments are met. Further details are provided in Note 8 of the Statement of Accounts.

Revenue Summary

2025/26	Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Reserves (£'000)	CERA (£'000)	Total (£'000)	Variance (£000)	Variance (%)
Employees	38,233	36,871	548		37,419	(814)	-2.1%
Premises	2,818	3,344			3,344	526	18.7%
Transport	1,327	1,582	89		1,671	344	26.0%
Supplies	6,182	5,333	(30)		5,303	(879)	-14.2%
Third Party Payments	367	429			429	62	16.9%
Capital Finance & Charges	4,501	2,568		2,338	4,906	405	9%
Income	(1,039)	(1,557)	151		(1,406)	(367)	35%
Use of Reserves	(601)						
Sub Total	**51,788**	**48,571**	**758**	**2,338**	**51,667**	**(121)**	**-0.2%**
Levies	(51,788)	(51,788)			(51,788)	0	0.0%
Outturn Position					**(121)**	**(121)**	**0.2%**

Usable Reserves

Usable Reserves	Balance 31 March 2025	Transfers (in/)/out 2025/26	Balance 31 March 2026
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Earmarked Reserves	(8,938)	(759)	(9,697)
General Fund	(1,871)	(121)	(1,989)
Capital Receipts Reserve	(73)	(24)	(97)
Total Usable Reserves	**(10,882)**	**(904)**	**(11,783)**

Capital Performance

The Authority approved a capital programme of £6,100k in January 2025, supplemented by £2,589k of rollover funding from prior years. Capital expenditure for 2025/26 totalled £5,008k, with detailed breakdown of the schemes seen below.

Due to project slippage, approximately £3,885k will be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete ongoing schemes. The Authority continues to monitor capital delivery closely, with improved scrutiny and planning processes now in place.

Capital Fundinging

During the year, the Authority also received capital grant funding from Welsh Government to support decarbonisation initiatives, for facilities and EV charging infrastructure, alongside fixed contributions towards the purchase of electric vehicles. These investments contribute to the authority's long-term resilience.

Funding	Amount £000
Grant Funding	204
Contributions	2,338
Borrowing	2,466
Total	**5,008**

Scheme	Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Rollover £'000
Vehicles*	3,193	1,751	1,460
Buildings	3,199	1,997	1,431
Training Towers	550	152	245
Equipment	1,747	904	749
Capital Programme	**8,689**	**4,804**	**3,885**
In year Grant Funding			
Electric Vehicles		57	
Electric Charging		89	
Sustainability works		58	
Total		**5,008**	

*Expenditure on vehicles excludes any leased assets.

Hwb Awen

Cumulative capital expenditure on Hwb Awen is included within Buildings in the table above and totals £1,231k at year end (£11k in 2024/25), with further costs required in 2026/27 to progress the project to RIBA Gateway 4.

Treasury Management

The Authority remained compliant with its Treasury Management Strategy throughout 2025/26. Borrowing and investments stayed within approved limits, and no defaults were reported. Investment income exceeded budget expectations, and the Authority's net borrowing position at year-end was £15,756k, which is below the Capital Financing Requirement.

The Authority continues to work with a Treasury Advisor, Arlingclose, to plan and manage interest rate risk and borrowing strategy effectively.

Pension Costs

Employer contributions to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme totalled £5,437k, with pension payments to retired members amounting to £10,872k, and commutation of pensions and lump sum retirement benefits totalling £3,332k. The scheme remains unfunded, with the liability increasing from £208,143k to £232,624k following actuarial remeasurement movements and pension costs recognised during the year.

For the Local Government Pension Scheme, the employer's primary rate remained at 18.3%, and the same secondary rate reduction of £548k continued to be applied.

Outlook

Cashflow and Future Considerations

The Authority maintained a strong cash position throughout 2025/26, supported by timely receipt of precepts and active treasury management.

Looking ahead, future cashflows may be affected by the timing of capital projects, particularly the Training Centre development. The Authority continues to monitor liquidity closely, using short-term investments and scenario planning to ensure sufficient flexibility to meet operational and capital commitments. Specialist advice is provided by Arlingclose, supporting the Authority's approach to prudent and informed treasury decision-making.

Future Budget Pressures and Mitigation

The Authority continues to face rising cost pressures and increasing demand on services. While the 2025/26 budget was approved by the Authority during the year, future budget pressures and associated funding gaps are set out in the Medium Term Resource Strategy.

Consideration of Section 114

The Authority reviewed updated guidance from the CIPFA regarding issuing a Section 114 notice, when a Treasurer notifies an authority that they are heading for a breach of the legal requirement to balance their revenue budget. Despite the financial pressures facing the wider public sector, the Authority maintained strong financial oversight throughout the year, including regular monitoring of budgets, reserves, and emerging risks.

At no point was a Section 114 notice considered necessary. This reflects the Authority's commitment to sound financial management and its proactive approach to protecting public services and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Further Information

Additional information about these accounts is available from Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Headquarters, Ffordd Salesbury, St Asaph, LL17 0JJ.

Interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed.

At the appropriate time, availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised on the website for North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

www.northwalesfire.gov.wales/fire-and-rescue-authority/financial/

Acknowledgements

As Section 151 Officer, appointed on 1 May 2026, it is a pleasure to sign off my first set of accounts for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

In doing so, I would like to express my sincere thanks to colleagues across the organisation who have contributed to the preparation of this Narrative Report and the wider Statement of Accounts. In particular, I would like to recognise the continued professionalism and dedication of the Finance team, whose efforts have ensured the timely and accurate delivery of the Authority's financial reporting.

I would also like to thank our partners and stakeholders for their ongoing support and constructive engagement throughout 2025/26.

Helen MacArthur

Assistant Chief Fire Officer and S151 Officer
North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Treasurer.
- to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and to safeguard its assets.
- to approve the Statement of Accounts.

<u>Authority's Certificate</u>

I approve the Statement of Accounts of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority as at 31 March 2026.

Signed:______________________________ Dated:________________

Chairman, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

The Section 151 Officer's Responsibilities

The Section 151 Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

In preparing the Statement of Accounts, the Section 151 Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently.
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent.
- complied with the Code of Practice.
- kept proper accounting records which were up-to-date.
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

<u>Section 151 Officer's Certificate</u>

I certify that the Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the arrangements set out above, and presents a true and fair view of the financial position of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority as at 31 March 2026 and the Authority’s income and expenditure for the year then ended.

Signed:____________________________ Dated: 28/05/2026

Section 151 Officer, North Wales Fire and Rescue Awdurdod

Audit of Accounts Report – North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Audit year: 2025-26

Date issued: September 2026

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Contents

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

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For further information, or if you require any of our publications in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us by telephone on 029 2032 0500, or email info@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Introduction

Catherine Mealing-Jones

Auditor General for Wales

As the newly appointed Auditor General for Wales, I am pleased to share my Audit of Accounts Report. The Report summarises the main findings from my audit of your 2025-26 annual report and accounts. My team have already discussed these findings with the Head of Finance and Procurement.

My team have substantially completed the audit work as set out in my Audit Plan dated June 2026. The remaining tasks involve continuous planning and review.

Since my Audit Plan, I have updated materiality to reflect the 2025-26 accounts. I have not identified any new audit risks. My response to previously identified risks is set out in **Appendix 1**.

I am required to provide an opinion on whether the accounts have been properly prepared, and give a true and fair view, in all material respects. My proposed audit opinion and basis for it is outlined on page 8.

It is the responsibility of those charged with governance, i.e. the Authority to address any matters raised in my report and provide me with a Letter of Representation.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the officers and staff of North Wales FRA for their cooperation throughout the audit process which has been invaluable in completing this audit effectively.

Your audit at a glance

We intend to issue an **unqualified opinion** on the accounts

See **Appendix 3**

There are no **other significant matters** to report

See **Audit findings**

There are **uncorrected misstatements** in the accounts which we wish to draw to your attention.

See **Audit findings**

We have raised **One recommendation** as a result of our work

See **Appendix 5**

Subject to no further material issues being identified. We are aiming to certify your accounts ahead of the deadline of **30 September 2026**.

Materiality

I use professional judgement to set a materiality threshold to identify and correct misstatements that could affect users' decisions, considering both financial errors and disclosure requirements according to the applicable accounting framework and laws. My team updates materiality throughout the audit and I include in this report matters that exceed my reporting threshold, as set out below:

Materiality

Set at 2% of gross expenditure based upon 2025-26 draft financial statements

North Wales FRA
£1,061,000

Fire Fighter Pension Fund
£284,000

Reporting threshold (trivial)

Set at 5% of materiality

North Wales FRA
£53,000

Fire Fighter Pension Fund
£14,000

There are some areas of the accounts that may be of more importance to the user of the accounts. We confirm lower materiality levels for these:

Senior Officer Remuneration Disclosures

£1,000

Related party disclosures

£10,000

Audit Findings

Misstatements

A misstatement arises where information in the accounts is not in accordance with accounting standards.

Uncorrected misstatements

We set out below the misstatements we identified in the accounts, which have been discussed with management but remain uncorrected. We request that these misstatements be corrected.

If you decide not to correct these misstatements, we ask that you provide us with the reasons in writing for not correcting them:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Corrected misstatements

During our audit, we identified misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

These are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Other significant issues

International Standard on Auditing 260 requires us to communicate with those charged with governance. We must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of North Wales FRA's financial reporting process.

There were no such issues identified during the audit.

Proposed audit opinion

Audit opinion

We intend to issue an unqualified audit opinion on this year's accounts once you have provided us with a Letter of Representation (see below).

Our proposed audit report is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Letter of representation

A Letter of Representation is a formal letter in which you confirm to us the accuracy and completeness of information provided to us during the audit. Some of this information is required by auditing standards; other information may relate specifically to your audit.

The letter we are requesting you to sign is included in **Appendix 4,** the contents of which are in line with our standard request for representations

Recommendations

We have made a recommendation during the audit, which is set out in **Appendix 5** along with management's response to the recommendation.

We will monitor progress against the recommendations during next year's audit.

Audit team and ethical compliance

The main members of my team who carried out the audit work, together with their contact details, are summarised in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1: My local audit team

Engagement Lead	Kate Havard Kate.Havard@audit.wales
Audit Manager	Carwyn Rees Carwyn.Rees@audit.wales
Audit Lead	Kieran Vickery Kieran.Vickery@audit.wales

Compliance with ethical standards

We confirm that:

- we have complied with the ethical standards we are required to follow in carrying out our work;
- we have remained independent of yourselves;
- our objectivity has not been compromised; and
- we have no relationships that could undermine our independence or objectivity.

Appendix 1 – Audit risks and outcomes

My Audit Plan set out the risks of material misstatement for the audit of North Wales FRA's accounts. **Exhibit 2** lists these audit risks and sets out how they were addressed as part of the audit. No additional audit risks have been identified since that need to be brought to your attention.

Exhibit 2: Audit risks reported previously, work done and outcome

Audit risk	Work done	Outcome
Risk of management override The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.32-33].	The audit team: • tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements; • reviewed accounting estimates for bias. • Considered if there were any transactions outside of the normal course of business	Audit work did not identify any instances of management override of controls.

Valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus The pension fund liability estimates are based on assumptions and as a result there is a high level of uncertainty in the calculations. The calculation is also sensitive to economic conditions and the impact of legal cases.	The audit team: • Evaluated the actuary's instructions, competence, and the accuracy of the information provided. • Tested the accuracy of the pension fund net liability and disclosures in the financial statements. • Assessed the reasonableness of assumptions and the impact of any legal cases on the net liability.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus.
Valuation of land and buildings The value of land and buildings in the balance sheet is subjective and can change significantly due to economic conditions and revaluation requirements.	The audit team: • assessed the work undertaken by the authority to determine that asset values are not materially misstated.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of land and buildings.
Senior officer remuneration Remuneration paid to senior officers continues to be of high interest and is material by nature. Therefore, there is a risk that even low-value errors in the disclosure could result in a material misstatement.	The audit team: • Understood the movements in the senior management team during 2025-26. • Verified that amounts paid are consistent with evidence and were in accordance with the approved pay policy.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the disclosure of senior officer remuneration.

Related party disclosures There is an increased risk of material misstatement because these disclosures are of significant public interest and are considered material by nature.	The audit team: • Reviewed the Authority's process for identifying related party relationships and associated transactions and balances. • Undertook procedures to confirm the completeness of related party relationships. • Ensured disclosures are complete, accurate, consistent with evidence, and in accordance with the Local Government Code.	Audit work did not identify any issues with Related Party disclosures.

Appendix 2 – Summary of corrections made

During our audit, we identified the following misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

Value of correction	Accounts area	Explanation
£2,192,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Disposals** Reclassification of movement in depreciation to show value of assets that have been disposed. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the historic depreciation of assets that have been disposed during the year.
£850,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Impairments** Reclassification of Impairments due to expenditure that does not impact the valuation due to presided valuation methods. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the movements on assets during the year
£177,000 - £2,133,000	**Note 30 – Defined Benefit Pension Scheme** Various reclassifications between lines within the note. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately reflect movements in pension balances in line with actuarial findings.

Appendix 3 – Proposed audit report

The report of the Auditor General for Wales to the members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of:

- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority;
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund

for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority financial statements comprise the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes, including the material accounting policies.

The Firefighters' Pension Fund Accounts comprise the Fund Account and Net Assets Statement and related notes including the material accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund as at 31 March 2026 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing in the UK (ISAs (UK)) and Practice Note 10 ‘Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom’. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report.

My staff and I are independent of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council’s Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters’ Pension Fund’s ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the responsible financial officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and my auditor’s report thereon. The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for the other information contained within the annual report or accompanying it. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to

determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of my audit:

- the information contained in the Narrative Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26;
- the information given in the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with guidance.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Narrative Report or the Annual Governance Statement.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters, which I report to you, if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.
- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my team;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

Responsibilities of the responsible financial officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts included in the Statement, the responsible financial officer is responsible for:

- the preparation of the statement of accounts, which give a true and fair view and comply with proper practices;
- maintaining proper accounting records;
- internal controls as the responsible financial officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of statements of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- assessing the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible financial officer anticipates that the services provided by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with section 13(2) of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Enquiring of management, internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's policies and procedures concerned with:

  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Considering as an audit team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals.
- Obtaining an understanding of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund.
- Obtaining an understanding of related party relationships.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management and the Authority about actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all audit team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and Firefighters' Pension Fund's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Certificate of completion of audit

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Auditor General for Wales' Code of Audit Practice.

Signature
Auditor General for Wales
Date

1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Appendix 4 – Letter of representation

[Audited body's letterhead]

Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

[date]

Representations regarding the 2025-26 financial statements

This letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for the year ended 31 March 2026, for the purpose of expressing an opinion on their truth and fairness and their proper preparation.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made enquiries as we consider sufficient, we can make the following representations to you.

Management representations

Responsibilities

We have fulfilled our responsibilities for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with legislative requirements and Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26; in particular the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance therewith;
- the design, implementation, maintenance and review of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

Information provided

We have provided you with:

- full access to:
  - all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as books of account and supporting documentation, minutes of meetings and other matters;

  - additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - unrestricted access to staff from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and involves:
  - management;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
  - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements;
- our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others;
- our knowledge of all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements; and
- the identity of all related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware;

Financial statement representations

All transactions, assets and liabilities have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

The methods, the data and the significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed.

All events occurring subsequent to the reporting date which require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted for or disclosed.

All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to the auditor and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions. The effects of uncorrected misstatements identified during the audit are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole. A summary of these items is set out below:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Representations by those charged with governance

We acknowledge that the representations made by management, above, have been discussed with us.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of true and fair financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The financial statements were approved by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on 21 September 2026.

We confirm that we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to you. We confirm that, as far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which you are unaware.

Signed by:	Signed by:
Officer who signs on behalf of management	Member who signs on behalf of those charged with governance
Date:	Date:

Appendix 5 – Recommendation

1. Inventory Management of Fleet Items

The Authority’s Technology One software includes an inventory module, which is used for their main stores inventory. This allows automatic calculations of issue prices and valuation of items remaining in stock at the year-end, based on invoices received and issues processed. This is not used for fleet inventory currently, which is maintained by a spreadsheet.

In the testing of issues of fleet inventory, it was identified that some fleet items were being issued at a price which was not consistent with the Authority’s accounting policy of ‘first in, first out’ (FIFO). Whilst this had a trivial impact upon the accounts for 2025-26, it is recommended that the process for inventory management for fleet items is incorporated into the Technology One system to ensure that issue prices and closing inventory values are accurately recorded.

Priority:

Medium

Accepted in full by management:

Yes

Management response:

The Service will review the suitability and efficiency of transitioning fleet inventory management into the TechnologyOne inventory module. The review will be completed by December 2026 to enable full integration by March 2027, where appropriate. If full integration is not considered the most effective solution, an alternative process will be implemented to ensure inventory issues and stock valuations are calculated consistently in line with the Authority's FIFO accounting policy.

Implementation date:

March 2027

Audit quality

Our commitment to audit quality in Audit Wales is absolute. We believe that audit quality is about getting things right first time.

We use a three lines of assurance model to demonstrate how we achieve this. We have established an Audit Quality Committee to co-ordinate and oversee those arrangements. We subject our work to independent scrutiny by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and our Chair of the Board acts as a link to our Board on audit quality. For more information see our latest audit quality report.

Our People

- Selection of right team
- Use of specialists
- Supervisions and review

Arrangements for achieving audit quality Selection of right team

- Audit platform
- Ethics
- Guidance
- Culture
- Learning and development
- Leadership
- Technical support

Independent assurance

- EQRs
- Themed reviews
- Cold reviews
- Root cause analysis
- Peer review
- Audit Quality Committee
- External monitoring

Supporting you

Audit Wales has a range of resources to support the scrutiny of Welsh public bodies, and to support them in continuing to improve the services they provide to the people of Wales.

Visit our website to find:

Our publications which cover our audit work at public bodies.

Information on our upcoming work and forward work programme for performance audit.

Data tools to help you better understand public spending trends.

Details of our Good Practice work and events including the sharing of emerging practice and insights from our audit work.

Our newsletter which provides you with regular updates on our public service audit work, good practice, and events.

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

Audit Wales

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Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@audit.wales

Website: www.audit.wales

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

This statement shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (grants, contributions etc.) by local authorities compared to resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP). It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes according to the type of expenditure incurred. Income and Expenditure accounted for under GAAP is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2024/25				2025/26		
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £'000	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis £'000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income & Exp Statement £'000		Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £'000	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis £'000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income & Exp Statement £'000
46,713	(9,456)	37,257	Provision of Fire Services	50,909	(11,506)	39,403
(48,549)	10,308	(38,241)	Other Income & Expenditure	(51,788)	11,699	(40,089)
(1,836)	**852**	**(984)**	**Deficit or (Surplus) on Provision of Services**	**(879)**	**193**	**(686)**

2024/25				2025/26		
General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Total General Fund £'000		General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Total General Fund £'000
(1,575)	(7,519)	(9,094)	Brought Forward	(1,871)	(9,011)	(10,882)
(1,836)		(1,836)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	(879)	0	(879)
	48	48	Transfer between General Fund Balance and Capital Grants Unapplied	0	0	0
1,540	(1,540)	0	Transfer between General Fund Balance and Earmarked General Fund Reserves	759	(783)	(24)
(1,871)	**(9,011)**	**(10,882)**	**Closing General Fund Balance**	**(1,989)**	**(9,794)**	**(11,783)**

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with GAAP, rather than the amount to be funded from contributions. The Authority's expenditure is funded by contributions from the six Local Authorities in North Wales in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The contribution position is shown in both the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the Movement in Reserves Statement.

2024/25				2025/26			
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Note	Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
39,032	(1,775)	37,257	Provision of Fire Services		40,960	(1,557)	39,403
39,032	**(1,775)**	**37,257**	**Cost of Services**		**40,960**	**(1,557)**	**39,403**
56	0	56	Other Operating Expenditure		2	0	2
11,352	(182)	11,170	Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	**9**	12,125	(224)	11,901
0	(49,467)	(49,467)	Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	**10**	0	(51,992)	(51,992)
		(984)	**(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services**				**(686)**
0	(2,003)	(2,003)	(Surplus) or Deficit on Revaluation of Property, Plant & Equipment Assets	**18**	0	(318)	(318)
		(26,136)	Remeasurement of the Net Defined Benefit Liability	**18**			22,564
		(28,139)	**Other Comprehensive (Income) & Expenditure**				**22,246**
		(29,123)	**Total Comprehensive (Income) & Expenditure**				**21,560**

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Authority, analysed into ‘usable reserves’ (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce contributions from the Constituent Authorities) and other reserves. The Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Authority’s services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance which is funded by contributions from the six Constituent Authorities. The Net Increase / Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves line shows the statutory General Fund Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Authority.

The movements in 'Unusable Reserves' in local government accounting are notional, primarily reflecting changes in asset valuation (like buildings or pension liabilities). These are figures on paper, rather than 'cash backed', and cannot be spent on services.

2025/26	Note	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked and Grant Reserves £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Earmarked Capital Receipts £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2025		**(1,871)**	**(8,938)**	**0**	**(73)**	**(10,882)**	**176,422**	**165,540**
Movement in Reserves during 2025/26								
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services		(686)	0	0	0	(686)	0	(686)
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		0	0	0	0	0	22,246	22,246
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		**(686)**	**0**	**0**		**(686)**	**22,246**	**21,560**
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	**7**	(219)	0	0	0	(219)	219	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		**(905)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(905)**	**22,465**	**21,560**
Other Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	**8**	783	(759)	0	(24)	0	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2025/26		**(121)**	**(759)**	**0**	**(24)**	**(905)**	**22,465**	**21,560**
Balance as at 31 March 2026		**(1,989)**	**(9,697)**	**0**	**(97)**	**(11,783)**	**198,887**	**187,100**

2024/25	Note	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked and Grant Reserves £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Earmarked Capital Receipts £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2024		**(1,575)**	**(7,398)**	**(48)**	**(73)**	**(9,094)**	**203,757**	**194,663**
Movement in Reserves during 2024/25								
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services		(984)	0	0	0	(984)	0	(984)
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		0	0	0	0	0	(28,139)	(28,139)
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		**(984)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(984)**	**(28,139)**	**(29,123)**
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	**7**	(804)	0	0	0	(804)	804	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		**(1,788)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(1,788)**	**(27,335)**	**(29,123)**
Other Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	**8**	1,492	(1,540)	48	0	0	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2024/25		**(296)**	**(1,540)**	**48**	**0**	**(1,788)**	**(27,335)**	**(29,123)**
Balance as at 31 March 2025		**(1,871)**	**(8,938)**	**0**	**(73)**	**(10,882)**	**176,422**	**165,540**

BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Authority. The net assets of the Authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the Authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves is those that the Authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

31 March 2025 £'000		Note	31 March 2026 £'000
63,041	Property, Plant & Equipment	11	65,589
99	Intangible Assets	11	197
103	Long Term Debtors	14	113
63,243	**Long Term Assets**		**65,899**
663	Inventories	13	813
2,439	Short Term Debtors	14	1,896
2,523	Cash & Cash Equivalents	15	2,624
5,625	**Current Assets**		**5,333**
(10,791)	Short Term Borrowing	12	(4,203)
(375)	Short Term Provisions	17	(322)
(6,045)	Short Term Creditors	16	(8,799)
(173)	Short Term Lease Liabilities	29	(209)
(17,384)	**Current Liabilities**		**(13,533)**
(208,143)	Pension Liability	18	(232,624)
0	Long Term Provisions	17	0
(425)	Long Term Lease Liabilities	29	(505)
(8,456)	Long Term Borrowing	12	(11,674)
(217,024)	**Long Term Liabilities**		**(244,803)**
(165,540)	**Net Assets**		**(187,104)**
(10,882)	Usable Reserves	8	(11,783)
176,422	Unusable Reserves	18	198,887
165,540	**Total Reserves**		**187,104**

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Authority are funded by way of contributions and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Authority's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Authority.

2024/25 £'000		Note	2025/26 £'000
(984)	**Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services**		**(686)**
(4,615)	Adjustments to Net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services for Non-Cash Movements	**19**	(7,622)
(437)	Adjustments for Items Included in the net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services that are Investing and Financing Activities	**19**	(429)
(6,036)	Net Cash Flows From Operating Activities	**19**	(8,737)
7,508	Investing Activities	**20**	5,214
(1,022)	Financing Activities	**21**	3,422
450	Net (Increase) or Decrease in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(101)
(2,973)	**Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period**		**(2,523)**
(2,523)	**Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Reporting Period**	**15**	**(2,624)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The notes present information about the basis of preparation of the financial statements and the specific accounting policies used. They provide information not presented elsewhere in the financial statements and are relevant to an understanding of the accounts.

1 ACCOUNTING STANDARDS THAT HAVE BEEN ISSUED BUT NOT YET ADOPTED

Where a new Standard has been published but has not yet been adopted by the Code, the Authority is required to disclose information relating to the impact of the accounting change. The changes that are introduced by the 2026/27 Code where disclosures are required in the 2025/26 financial statements are:

a) **Amendments to FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Amendments to Heritage assets)** issued in March 2024
b) **Amendments to the Classification and Measurement of Financial Instruments (Amendments to IFRS 9 and IFRS 7)** issued in May 2024
c) **Annual improvements to IFRS accounting standards – Volume 11** issued in July 2024
d) **Contracts Referencing Nature-dependent Electricity (Amendments to IFRS 9 and IFRS 7)** issued in December 2024

The Authority does not expect the adoption of items a) to d) to result in material changes to the recognition or measurement of amounts reported in the financial statements, and it is anticipated that the application of these amendments will be limited.

2 CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting policies are the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

In applying the accounting policies set out in Appendix 1, the Authority has been required to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgement in the Statement of Accounts is as follows:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government as a whole. However the Authority has determined that this uncertainty is not sufficient to indicate that the assets of the Authority might be impaired as a result of the need to reduce levels of service provision.

3 ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND OTHER MAJOR SOURCES OF ESTIMATION AND UNCERTAINTY

The statement of accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the authority about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The main items in the Authority's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2026, for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Property, Plant and Equipment - The Authority revalues its assets every 5 years supported by indexation in the intervening years. Indexation is a tool to apply an approximation of market changes, and the choice of index is a matter of judgement made in the context of providing a reasonable estimate of the movement in the value of an asset from the prior year. It is possible that property values could continue to fluctuate, especially during times of economic uncertainty, with a risk of divergence in indexed values compared to the professional valuations produced by market evidence at the quinquennial revaluation.

Valuations are based on assumptions about asset conditions, useful lives, residual values, and market conditions. These judgements are underpinned by the best available information and made by qualified valuers.

The last full revaluation was completed on 31 March 2023, and a further review of all fire station buildings was completed via a desktop revaluation exercise as at 31 March 2024. Indexation has been applied to the carrying value in 2025/26 using indices that best reflect the underlying cost drivers of each asset class.

Further information is provided in the Accounting Polices and in the Property, Plant and Equipment note.

Pension Liability - Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and, for the Local Government Pension Scheme, the expected return on pension fund assets.

Given the sensitivity of the pension liability to changes in key actuarial assumptions, there is a significant risk that reasonably possible changes in assumptions could lead to a material adjustment to the net pension liability in future financial years.

Consulting actuaries are engaged to provide the Authority with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. Further information is provided within the Pension Fund Account.

4 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

The pre-audit Statement of Accounts was certified for publication by the Section 151 Officer on 28 May 2026. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes.

Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing as at 31 March 2026, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

There have been no material events after the balance sheet date.

5 NOTE TO THE EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

2025/26	Adjustment for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Charge for Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Provision of Fire Services	(2,075)	(9,555)	124	(11,506)
Net Cost of Service	**(2,075)**	**(9,555)**	**124**	**(11,506)**
Other Income & Expenditure				
Other Income & Expenditure from the expenditure and funding analysis	(202)	11,472	429	11,699
Differences between the General Fund surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus on the provision of services	**(2,277)**	**1,917**	**553**	**193**

2024/25	Adjustment for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Charge for Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Provision of Fire Services	(1,590)	(8,064)	198	(9,456)
Net Cost of Service	**(1,590)**	**(8,064)**	**198**	**(9,456)**
Other Income & Expenditure				
Other Income & Expenditure from the expenditure and funding analysis	(862)	10,733	437	10,308
Differences between the General Fund surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus on the provision of services	**(2,452)**	**2,669**	**635**	**852**

Adjustments for capital purposes – this column adds in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in the services line, and for:

- Other operating expenditure – adjusts for capital disposals with a transfer of income on disposal of assets and the amounts written off for those assets.
- Financing and investment income and expenditure – the statutory charges for capital financing i.e. minimum revenue provision and other revenue contributions are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices.
- Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure – capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices. Revenue grants are adjusted from those receivable in the year to those receivable without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied throughout the year. The taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied in the year.

Net change for the pensions adjustments - Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS 19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income:

- For services this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs.
- For financing and investment income and expenditure – the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the CIES.

Other Adjustments - Other adjustments between amounts debited/credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute:

- For financing and investment income and expenditure the other statutory adjustments column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the timing differences for premiums and discounts.
- The charge under Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations that was projected to be received at the start of the year and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future Surpluses or Deficits on the General Fund.

6 EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ANALYSED BY NATURE

2024/25 £000		2025/26 £000
	Expenditure	
25,889	Employees	27,216
10,312	Other Operating Costs	10,260
385	Support Services	429
56	(Gain)/loss on the disposal of assets	2
11,352	Financing and Investment Expenditure	12,125
2,445	Capital Financing Costs	3,055
50,439	**Total Expenditure**	**53,087**
	Income	
(793)	Fees, Charges & Other Service Income	(895)
(182)	Interest and Investment Income	(224)
(48,549)	Levies from Constituent Authorities	(51,788)
(1,899)	Government Grants and Contributions	(866)
(51,423)	**Total Income**	**(53,773)**
(984)	**(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services**	**(686)**

7 ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER STATUTE

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the authority in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to arrive at the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the authority to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General Fund balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of an authority are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the authority are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund balance therefore summarises the resources that the authority is statutorily empowered to spend on its services or on capital investment (or the deficit of resources that the authority is required to recover) at the end of the financial year.

Capital receipts reserve

The capital receipts reserve holds the proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets, which are restricted by statute from being used other than to fund new capital expenditure or to be set aside to finance historical capital expenditure. The balance on the reserve shows the resources that have yet to be applied for these purposes at the year-end.

Capital grants unapplied

The capital grants unapplied account (reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the authority has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure against which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place.

2024/25						2025/26				
General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Capital Receipts Reserves £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Total Unusable Reserves £'000	**Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations**	General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Capital Receipts Reserves £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Total Unusable Reserves £'000
(2,602)	0	0	(2,602)	2,602	Depreciation and impairment	(2,967)	0	0	(2,967)	2,967
156	0	0	156	(156)	Revaluation losses/Gains on Property	(89)	0	0	(89)	89
(56)	0	0	(56)	56	Disposal of non-current assets	(2)	0	(24)	(26)	26
1,459	0	0	1,459	(1,459)	Capital expenditure financed from earmarked reserve/CERA	2,338	0	0	2,338	(2,338)
918	0	0	918	(918)	Capital expenditure funded from grants	204	0	0	204	(204)
1,957	0	0	1,957	(1,957)	Financing Capital (MRP)	2,138	0	0	2,138	(2,138)
1,832	**0**	**0**	**1,832**	**(1,832)**		**1,622**	**0**	**(24)**	**1,598**	**(1,598)**
11,028	0	0	11,028	(11,028)	Employers Pension contributions and payments to pensioners	12,123	0	0	12,123	(12,123)
(13,697)	0	0	(13,697)	13,697	Reversal of retirement benefits in the CIES	(14,040)	0	0	(14,040)	14,040
(2,669)	**0**	**0**	**(2,669)**	**2,669**		**(1,917)**	**0**	**0**	**(1,917)**	**1,917**
0	48	0	48	(48)	Adjustment to Grants Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
(15)	0	0	(15)	15	Movement in Accumulated Absence accrual	100	0	0	100	(100)
(852)	**48**	**0**	**(804)**	**804**	**Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulation**	**(195)**	**0**	**(24)**	**(219)**	**219**

8 USABLE RESERVES

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2025/26.

Reserve	Purpose of the Reserve	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000	Transfers (in) / out £'000	Balance 31 March 2025 £'000	Transfers (in) / out £'000	Balance 31 March 2026 £'000
Service Reserves						
Pension Reserve	Additional pension costs relating to changes to pension rules	(545)	(525)	(1,070)	(548)	(1,618)
Interest Reserve	Mitigate interest rate increases impacting the revenue budget	(300)	0	(300)	0	(300)
Fire Hydrant Repairs	Funding of the backlog of hydrant repairs	(90)	0	(90)	0	(90)
PPE Uniform / Stock	Increased uniform costs due to changes in legislation	(697)	(71)	(768)	0	(768)
Transformational Change	Funding for the delivery of transformational change projects	(851)	0	(851)	0	(851)
Facilities Improvements	Ensure buildings meet required standard and improve energy efficiency	(651)	(329)	(980)	0	(980)
Legal Liability	Funding of future legal liabilities for known/expected claims	(310)	0	(310)	30	(280)
Training	Implement changes to training provision as required by legislation	(250)	0	(250)	0	(250)
Major Incidents	Offset costs of major incidents in excess of budget	(150)	0	(150)	0	(150)
System Improvements	A fund set aside to meet the cost of system improvements	(711)	0	(711)	0	(711)
Inflation	Offset costs of inflation in excess of budget	(250)	0	(250)	(151)	(401)
Pay Structure review	For on-going discussions regarding the pay structure for firefighters	(473)	0	(473)	0	(473)
Capital & Grants Reserves						
Capital Projects	A fund set aside for delayed schemes and retention costs	(914)	(89)	(1,003)	(90)	(1,093)
Radio Scheme	Emergency Service Network upgrade	(1,011)	(526)	(1,537)	0	(1,537)
Grant Reduction	Offset reduction in Fire Safety funding from Welsh Government	(195)	0	(195)	0	(195)
Total Earmarked Reserves		**(7,398)**	**(1,540)**	**(8,938)**	**(759)**	**(9,697)**
General Fund	Available for general purposes and to provide operational resilience	(1,575)	(296)	(1,871)	(121)	(1,989)
Capital Receipts	Retains receipts from asset sales for future capital expenditure	(73)	0	(73)	(24)	(97)
Capital Grants Unapplied	Holds capital grants and contributions not yet applied to expenditure	(48)	48	0	0	0
Total Usable Reserves		**(9,094)**	**(1,788)**	**(10,882)**	**(904)**	**(11,783)**

9 FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
619	Interest payable and similar charges	653
(182)	Interest receivable and similar income	(224)
10,733	Net Interest on the net defined benefit liability	11,472
11,170	**Total**	**11,901**

10 TAXATION AND NON SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
4,871	Anglesey Council	5,186
8,063	Conwy County Borough Council	8,562
6,812	Denbighshire County Council	7,271
10,957	Flintshire County Council	11,661
8,295	Gwynedd Council	8,919
9,551	Wrexham County Borough Council	10,189
48,549	**Levies from Constituent Authorities**	**51,788**
918	Capital Grants and Contributions	204
49,467	**Total Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income**	**51,992**

11 PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Movements on Balances

2025-2026	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property Plant & Equipment Total £'000	Intangible Assets Total £'000	Assets Held for Sale Total £'000
Gross Book Value at 1 April 2025	**52,890**	**26,623**	**766**	**80,279**	**233**	**0**
Re-categorisation of assets	181	533	(714)	**0**	0	0
Additions	848	2,747	1,681	**5,276**	135	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,079	0	0	**1,079**	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	0	(2,217)	0	**(2,217)**	0	0
Derecognition - Other	(2)	0	0	**(2)**	0	0
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2026	**54,996**	**27,686**	**1,733**	**84,415**	**368**	**0**
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment						
At 1 April 2025	(1,027)	(16,211)	0	**(17,238)**	(134)	0
Depreciation/Amortisation charge	(1,140)	(1,790)	0	**(2,930)**	(37)	0
Depreciation written out of the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Depreciation written out to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Impairment recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(762)	0	0	**(762)**	0	0
Impairment recognised in the surplus / deficit on the provision of services	(88)			**(88)**		
Derecognition - Disposals	0	2,192	0	**2,192**	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Accumulated Depreciation at 31 March 2026	**(3,017)**	**(15,809)**	**0**	**(18,826)**	**(171)**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2026	**51,979**	**11,877**	**1,733**	**65,589**	**197**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	51,863	10,412	766	**63,041**	99	0

2024-2025	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property Plant & Equipment Total £'000	Intangible Assets Total £'000	Assets Held for Sale Total £'000
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2024	**46,253**	**24,129**	**1,060**	**71,442**	**233**	**0**
Recognition of Right of Use Assets	593	328	0	921	0	
Gross Book Value at 1 April 2024	**46,846**	**24,457**	**1,060**	**72,363**	**233**	**0**
Re-categorisation of assets	483	577	(1,060)	0	0	0
Additions	3,402	2,366	766	6,534	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	2,003	0	0	2,003	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	156	0	0	156	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	0	(777)	0	(777)	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2025	**52,890**	**26,623**	**766**	**80,279**	**233**	**0**
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment						
At 1 April 2024	(43)	(15,355)	0	(15,398)	(92)	0
Depreciation/Amortisation charge	(984)	(1,577)	0	(2,561)	(42)	0
Depreciation written out of the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation written out to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	0	0	
Derecognition - Disposals	0	721	0	721	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accumulated Depreciation at 31 March 2024	**(1,027)**	**(16,211)**	**0**	**(17,238)**	**(134)**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	**51,863**	**10,412**	**766**	**63,041**	**99**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2024	46,210	8,774	1,060	56,044	141	0

Depreciation

Buildings are depreciated using componentisation, where an estimate is made of the useful life of each component of the building and a weighted average then used to calculate the annual charge.

Other assets are recognised at historic cost, which is a proxy for current cost on short life assets, and depreciated over their useful lives.

Revaluations and Impairments

The authority ensures that all property, plant and equipment to be measured at current value through a quinquennial revaluation process, supplemented by annual indexation in intervening years.

All valuations were carried out internally. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

The following indices were used for 2025/26 indexation:

Index	Average change %	Valuation Change £'000
BCIS All-In TPI	2.49	1,043
MSCI Capital Growth - Industrial and CoStar	3.00	36
MSCI Capital Growth - Offices and CoStar	0.10	-
Total		**1,079**

Valuations of vehicles, plant and equipment were based on current prices where there was an active second-hand market or latest list prices adjusted for the condition of the asset.

Capital Commitments

The Authority is committed to capital expenditure in future periods arising from contracts entered into at the Balance Sheet date. Capital expenditure committed at 31 March 2026 for future periods equates to £3,202k (2024/25: £1,813k). The commitments relate to the following:

Description	£'000
Building Works	2,012
Vehicles	764
Equipment	426
Total	**3,202**

Surplus Assets (Non operational property, plant and equipment)

The Authority does not have any material surplus assets.

12 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Categories of Financial Instruments

The following categories of financial instruments are carried in the Balance Sheet:

	Non Current		Current	
	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2026 £'000	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2026 £'000
Financial Assets at Amortised Cost:				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0	0	2,523	2,624
Debtors	103	113	2,439	1,896
Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost:				
Interest Accrued	0	0	(174)	(121)
Borrowings	(8,456)	(11,674)	(10,617)	(4,082)
Total Borrowing	**(8,456)**	**(11,674)**	**(10,791)**	**(4,203)**
Creditors	0	0	(6,045)	(8,799)
Lease Liability	(425)	(505)	(173)	(209)

Financial Instruments Gains/Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

	2024/25		2025/26	
	Financial Liabilities Measured at amortised cost £'000	Financial Assets Loans and receivables £'000	Financial Liabilities Measured at amortised cost £'000	Financial Assets Loans and receivables £'000
Interest expense in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	619	0	653	0
Interest income in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	(182)	0	(224)
Net gain/(loss) for the year	**619**	**(182)**	**653**	**(224)**

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities carried at Amortised Cost

Financial liabilities and financial assets represented by loans and receivables are carried on the Balance Sheet at amortised cost (in long term assets/liabilities with accrued interest in current assets/liabilities). Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments, using the following assumptions:

- For loans from the PWLB and other loans payable, borrowing from the PWLB has been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark market rates have been used to provide the fair value;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount or the billed amount;
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

	31-Mar-25		31-Mar-26	
	Carrying amount £'000	Fair value £'000	Carrying amount £'000	Fair value £'000
PWLB debt	(14,073)	(13,300)	(13,756)	(13,040)
Non-PWLB debt	(5,000)	(5,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Total Debt	**(19,073)**	**(18,300)**	**(15,756)**	**(15,040)**

The fair value has been calculated with direct reference to published price quotations in an active market. In the case of the Fire and Rescue Authority they are based on premiums that would be payable if PWLB loans were surrendered and provides an estimate of the additional interest payable compared to the same loan at current market rates discounted back to the current period.

13 INVENTORIES

	Main Stores		Fleet Stock	
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Balance at start of year	413	437	201	225
Purchases	952	470	203	330
Write offs/adjustments	(3)	(5)	(1)	(2)
Recognised as an Expense	(925)	(310)	(178)	(332)
Balance outstanding at year end	**437**	**592**	**225**	**221**

14 DEBTORS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Long Term	
103	Prepayments	113
103	**Total Long Term**	**113**
	Short Term	
445	Other Receivable Amounts	464
1,509	Trade Receivables	660
485	Prepayments	772
2,439	**Total Short Term**	**1,896**
2,542	**Total Long and Short Term Debtors**	**2,009**

15 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
2,517	Cash and Bank Balances	2,620
0	Short Term Deposits	0
6	Petty Cash Imprests	4
2,523	**Total**	**2,624**

16 CREDITORS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(820)	Other Payables	(3,783)
(5,225)	Trade Payables	(5,016)
(6,045)	**Total**	**(8,799)**

17 PROVISIONS

At 31 March 2026 the Authority held a provision with a value of £322k relating to employee liabilities. This provision will be utilised to offset revenue expenditure, when it occurs.

	Opening Balance £'000	Movements In £'000	Movements Out £'000	Closing balance £'000
Short Term Provisions	(375)	(1)	54	(322)
Long Term Provisions	0	0	0	0
Total	**(375)**	**(1)**	**54**	**(322)**

18 UNUSABLE RESERVES

31-Mar-25 £'000		31-Mar-26 £'000
(19,012)	Revaluation Reserve	(18,971)
(13,111)	Capital Adjustment Account	(15,069)
208,143	Pensions Reserve	232,624
402	Accumulated Absences Account	303
176,422	**Total**	**198,887**

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment.

The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost;
- used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation or disposed of and the gains are realised.

The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(17,304)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(19,012)**
(2,003)	Upward revaluation of assets	(1,079)
0	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	761
0	Adjustment from Capital Adjustment Account	0
295	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	359
(19,012)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(18,971)**

Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions.

The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement. The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Authority.

The Account also contains valuation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(10,935)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(13,111)**
2,602	Charges for depreciation & impairment of non-current assets	2,967
56	Amount of non current asset written off on disposal or sale	25
(156)	Adjustment relating to the revaluation of assets	89
(295)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(359)
2,207	**Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year**	**2,722**
(918)	Capital grants & contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(204)
(1,459)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund/ Earmarked reserves	(2,338)
(49)	Application of grants to capital financing from the capital grants unapplied account	0
(1,957)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	(2,138)
(4,383)	**Capital Financing Applied in year**	**(4,680)**
(13,111)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(15,069)**

Pensions Reserve

The pensions reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The authority accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the pensions reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
231,610	**Balance at 1 April**	**208,143**
(26,136)	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability	22,564
13,697	Reversal of Items related to retirement benefits debited to the Provision of Service in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	14,040
(11,028)	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(12,123)
(23,467)	**Movement on Pension Reserve**	**24,481**
208,143	**Balance at 31 March**	**232,624**

Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance from accruing for compensated absence earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
386	**Balance at 1 April**	**402**
(386)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(402)
402	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	303
402	**Balance at 31 March**	**303**

19 CASH FLOW STATEMENT - OPERATING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(984)	**Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services**	**(686)**
	Adjustment to net (surplus)/deficit for non-cash	
49	Increase/(Decrease) in Inventories	150
1,205	Increase/(Decrease) in Debtors	(533)
(428)	(Increase)/Decrease in Creditors	(2,754)
0	(Increase)/Decrease in Lease Liabilities	(81)
(2,602)	Depreciation Charge	(2,967)
0	Contributions Received/Capital Receipts	24
(2,608)	IAS 19 Pension Adjustments	(1,295)
0	Impairment Charge/Revaluation of Assets	(89)
(56)	Carrying amount of Non Current Assets sold or derecognised	(25)
(159)	Contribution (to)/from various Provisions	53
0	Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(204)
(16)	Accumulated Absences Reserve	99
(4,615)	**Sub Total**	**(7,622)**
	Adjustments for Items Included in the net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services that are Investing and Financing Activities	
(619)	Interest paid	(653)
182	Interest Received	224
(437)	**Sub Total**	**(429)**
(6,036)	**Net cash flow from operating activities**	**(8,737)**

20 CASH FLOW STATEMENT – INVESTING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
6,534	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	5,411
0	Less Right of Use Assets lease additions	(403)
56	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	2
918	Other receipts from investing activities	204
7,508	**Net cash flow from investing activities**	**5,214**

21 CASH FLOW STATEMENT – FINANCING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(5,000)	Cash receipts of short-term and long-term borrowing	(7,500)
3,714	Repayments of short-term and long-term borrowing	10,817
(173)	Cash payments for the reduction of outstanding lease	(324)
437	Other payments for financing activities	429
(1,022)	**Net cash flow from financing activities**	**3,422**

22 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Authority paid the following amounts to members of the Authority during the year:

2024/25 £		2025/26 £
90,515	Elected Members' Allowances	90,875
1,560	Elected Members' Expenses	1,203
1,142	Co-opted Members' costs	1,376
93,217	**Total**	**93,454**

Elected Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority are entitled to receive allowances in recognition of their roles and responsibilities. These allowances include a basic salary payable to all members, and where applicable, senior salaries for those undertaking additional duties such as Chair or Deputy Chair of the Authority or its committees.

In addition to allowances, Elected Members may claim reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties. These expenses typically include travel and subsistence costs associated with attending Authority meetings, training sessions, and other approved engagements.

Co-opted Members, who are appointed to provide independent input or specialist expertise - such as those serving on the Standards Committee - do not receive an allowance. Instead, they are eligible for payments in recognition of their participation in official meetings and related activities.

23 OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

The remuneration paid to the Authority's senior employees is detailed in the following table. Senior Officers whose salary is £150,000 or more are named.

Post Title	Year	Salary (Inc Fees & Allowances) £	Pension Contributions £	Total Remuneration £
Chief Fire Officer: Dawn Docx	**2025/26**	**162,057**	**29,656**	**191,713**
	2024/25	156,392	28,620	185,012
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (vacant from April 2025)	**2025/26**	**12,366**	**3,387**	**15,753**
	2024/25	125,114	38,785	163,899
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	**2025/26**	**122,020**	**22,330**	**144,350**
	2024/25	117,294	21,465	138,759
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (appointed March 2024)*	**2025/26**	**120,655**	**35,263**	**155,918**
	2024/25	101,921	25,901	127,822
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (appointed January 2025)**	**2025/26**	**116,535**	**33,964**	**150,499**
	2024/25	28,926	7,431	36,357
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (seconded March 2024)***	**2025/26**	**26,444**	**8,198**	**34,642**
	2024/25	47,314	13,938	61,252
Treasurer - Section 151 Officer (15 days per Year)	**2025/26**	**8,510**	**1,557**	**10,067**
	2024/25	8,340	1,526	9,866

* The fixed-term contract for the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) ended in December 2024. The postholder was re-appointed on a temporary basis in February 2025 and secured the role permanently in July 2025.

**The postholder was appointed on a temporary basis in January 2025 and was subsequently appointed on a permanent basis in July 2025.

***Assistant Chief Fire Officer temporarily seconded to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service as Chief Fire Officer, returned to NWFRS with effect from 13 November 2024 and subsequently left the organisation in June 2025. Salary costs for the secondment, totalling £107,708, and pension costs totalling £22,423, were met and reported by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Monitoring Officer is provided by Flintshire County Council as part of a Service Level Agreement so no costs for an individual are shown in the table above. Further details on the Monitoring Officer costs can be found within Note 27 – Related Parties.

The Authority's other employees receiving more than £60,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer pension contributions) were paid the following amounts:

Remuneration Band	Number of Employees	
	2024/25	2025/26
£60,000 - £64,999	22	8
£65,000 - £69,999	6	17
£70,000 - £74,999	4	4
£75,000 - £79,999	2	4
£80,000 - £84,999	0	0
£85,000 - £89,999	2	1
£90,000 - £94,999	2	1
£95,000 - £99,999	0	3

The following table gives the ratio between the Chief Fire Officer's remuneration and the median remuneration of Fire and Rescue Service staff:

2024/25		2025/26
£156,392	Chief Fire Officer	£162,057
£37,675	Median	£38,881
4.15	Ratio	4.17

The data in the table above includes total salary paid (excludes pension contributions). The staff that are employed under Retained Duty System (RDS) contracts have been included in the calculation on their Full Time Equivalent scale point rather than actual earnings.

The number of exit packages with total cost per band is set out in the table below. There were no compulsory or voluntary redundancies in either 2024/25 or 2025/26, and accordingly no redundancy costs or other compensation for loss of office were incurred.

All exit packages disclosed relate to employer-initiated terminations, arising from failed probationary periods or dismissals, with costs comprising pay in lieu of notice (PILON) only.

The 2024/25 comparative figures have been restated (previously disclosed as £0) to reflect the inclusion of all PILON costs relating to employer-initiated terminations, excluding ill-health retirements.

Exit Package Cost Band	Total Number of Exit Packages		Total Cost of Exit Packages	
	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26
£0 - £19,999	2	2	£3,100	£3,152
Total	**2**	**2**	**£3,100**	**£3,152**

24 EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

Fees payable to the Auditor General for Wales with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor:

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
60	Financial Audit Work	63
17	Performance Audit Work	18
77	**Total**	**81**

25 GRANTS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Credited to Services	
250	Home Safety Equipment	240
304	All Wales National Resilience	112
145	Youth & Young People Engagement	141
72	Operation Ugain	80
2	Windrush Grant	0
0	Welsh Government Culture Improvement Initiatives	38
209	Fire and Rescue Service Pay Pressures	51
982	**Total**	**662**
	Credited to taxation and non-specific income & expenditure	
377	Fireground Radios	0
115	Electric Vehicles	57
131	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure	89
295	Public Sector Low Carbon Heat Grant	58
918	**Total**	**204**

26 AGENCY SERVICES

The Authority acts as an agent on behalf of Welsh Government in administering two grant schemes for all the Fire and Rescue Services in Wales. The approved grants are paid to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service who are then responsible for distributing the grants to the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Authority acts as an agent for the Local Resilience Forum. This is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. Contributions from the various public bodies, are paid to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. This funding is utilised to pay for the expenditure of the Forum. As at 31 March 2026, the Authority held funds of £2k relating to the Forum.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
3,117	All Wales National Resilience	2,827
227	Youth and Young People Engagement	240
110	Local Resilience Forum	152
3,454	**Total**	**3,219**

27 RELATED PARTIES

The Authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Authority or to be controlled or influenced by the Authority. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Authority might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the authority.

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the authority operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants (the Revenue Support Grant is paid to constituent authorities) and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the authority has with other parties. Directly received grant receipts are shown in Note 25 and constituent authority contributions are shown in Note 10.

Members

Members of the authority have direct control over the authority's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2025/26 is shown in Note 22.

All Members complete a declaration of interest with related parties return. No Members of the Authority, or their close relations, entered into any declarable related party transaction in 2024/25 or 2025/26. A list of Elected Members' interests is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is available to view on the website - www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

Senior Officers

The Senior Officers completed a declaration of interest with related parties return for the year 2025/26. Senior Officers' remuneration is shown in Note 23.

An Assistant Chief Fire Officer declared an interest as a trustee with DangerPoint. The independent charity runs an education activity centre based in North Wales. Payments of £4,800 have been made to DangerPoint in 2025/26, with £7,700 outstanding at year end (paid 08/04/26) as part of Welsh Government grant funding (2024/25: £13,300). In addition funding is provided for the cost of an administrator, which amounted to £37,514 (2024/25: £34,826).

The treasurer was also contracted as Independent Board Chair for Powys Pension Fund and Merseyside Pension Fund and as a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Adra a housing association.

No income was received by the Authority during 2025/26 (2024/25: nil).

Other Public Bodies

Flintshire County Council provide the role of Monitoring Officer. This post is held by the Chief Officer (Governance)/Monitoring Officer and payments amounted to £20k (2024/25: £20k).

Mersey Internal Audit provide internal audit services for which payments amounted to £23k. As at 31 March 2026 nothing remained outstanding.

Carmarthenshire County Council, acting on behalf of the Dyfed Pension Fund, manage the payments made to firefighter pensioners on behalf of the Authority. They are also responsible for managing the records of current pensioners and active members of the scheme. Transactions in the year amounted to £120k (2024/25: £113k). As at 31 March 2026 nothing remained outstanding.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, via a secondment agreement, provide a Firefighter's Pension Lead for which payments in year amounted to £18k (2024/25: £18k) with £4k outstanding at year end.

There are joint arrangements with North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner as well as a shared control room. The Authority's contribution towards facilities management amounted to £291k (2024/25: £234k) with £146k outstanding at year end.

28 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND CAPITAL FINANCING

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the value of assets acquired under finance leases and PFI contracts), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the capital financing requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the authority that has yet to be financed.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
27,950	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	31,022
921	Recognition of IFRS16	0
28,871	**Opening CFR adjusted for IFRS16 implementation**	**31,022**
	Capital Investment	
6,534	Property, Plant & Equipment	5,411
	Sources of Finance	
(967)	Government Grants & Contributions	(204)
(1,957)	Sums set aside from revenue (MRP)	(2,138)
(1,459)	Direct Revenue Contributions	(2,338)
31,022	**Closing Capital Financing Requirement**	**31,753**
3,072	Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	731
3,072	**Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement**	**731**

The opening Capital Financing Requirement for 2024/25 has been restated to show the recognition of leases under IFRS16. Further details relating to leases can be found in Note 29.

29 LEASES

Authority as lessee - Right of Use Assets

Leases are recognised as right of use assets with a corresponding liability at the date from which the leased asset is available for use (or the IFRS 16 transition date of 01 April 2024, if later). The leases are typically for fixed periods in excess of one year, but may have extension options.

For arrangements previously accounted for as operating leases, a right-of-use asset and a lease liability are now on the balance sheet at 1 April 2024.

As permitted by the Code, the authority excludes leases for low value items that cost less than £10,000, and leases with a term shorter than 12 months. The Authority recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense over the lease term.

The authority has acquired vehicles and equipment by entering into lease contracts with typical terms of four years. In addition the authority leases three buildings with typical lease terms of five years.

The table shows the change in the right of use assets held under leases by the Authority.

	Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles & Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 April 2025	485	173	658
Additions	0	403	403
Revaluations	(2)	12	10
Depreciation and amortisation	(110)	(100)	(210)
Disposals	0	(31)	(31)
Balance as at 31 March 2026	**373**	**457**	**830**

The authority incurred the following expenses and cash flows in relation to leases:

	Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles & Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Comprehensive income and expenditure statement			
Interest expense on lease liabilities	24	3	27
Expense relating to short term leases	0	2	2
Expense relating to exempt leases of low value	0	13	13
Variable lease payments not included in the measure of lease liabilities	161	28	189
Cash flow statement			
Minimum lease payments	117	207	324

The Authority used the lessee's incremental borrowing rate (PWLB annuity rate) specific to the term and start date of the lease used to discount leased vehicles, and the rate implicit in the lease to discount leased properties.

The lease liabilities are due to be settled over the following time bands (measured at the undiscounted amounts of expected cash payments).

31-Mar-25 £'000		31-Mar-26 £'000
173	Less than one year	209
425	One to five years	505
0	More than five years	0
598	**Total undiscounted liabilities**	**714**

30 DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES

Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its employees, the Authority makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Authority has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that the employees earn their future entitlement.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme. The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme of which the Authority is an employer member of the Clwyd Pension fund. The governance of this scheme is the responsibility of Clwyd Pension Fund, Flintshire County Council in its capacity of Scheme Manager and Administering Authority.

Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations and overseen by the Pension Committee, including the appointment of the investment managers. The principal risks to the authority of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme.

These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements for an actuarial revaluation to be undertaken at regular intervals and for employer and employee contribution rates to be set. The employer contributions are charged to the cost of services based on employee earnings in the period rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions.

The charge to the levy reflects only the actual pension payments made during the year. However, to show the full cost of retirement benefits, these are first recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and then reversed out of the General Fund through the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following entries reflect these adjustments.

Any discretionary benefits or additional costs associated with ill-health retirements are an unfunded cost and charged separately to the Authority. To the extent that such costs are known they are included within the budget setting process and the Authority maintains a reserve to address any unplanned costs and to smooth the effect of changes to the employer contribution rates.

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS) is an unfunded defined benefits scheme, meaning that no investments are held to fund the liabilities. Contributions, at a rate set by the Welsh Government, made by the employer and employees on pensionable earnings are held in a pension fund account. Benefits paid to retirees are also charged to the account with any cash deficit being received from or paid to the Welsh Government.

The information that follows has been extracted from the disclosure reports provided by Mercer (for the LGPS pension scheme) and Government Actuary's Department (GAD) (for the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FFPS)). The most relevant details affecting the Pension funds are detailed below:

Guaranteed Minimum Pension equalisation and indexation

The Government has published a consultation on indexation and equalisation of Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMP), with the proposal being to extend the "interim solution" to those members who reach State Pension Age after 5 April 2021. A past service cost was included within the 2019/20 disclosures for extending the equalisation to all future retirees.

There was also a further court ruling on 20 November 2020 regarding GMP equalisation. The court ruled that scheme trustees are required to revisit past Cash Equivalent Transfer Values (CETVs) to ensure GMP equalisation. This may result in additional top-ups where GMP equalisation means that members did not receive their full entitlement. For public service pension schemes, the expectation is that this ruling will be taken forward on a cross scheme basis and will need legal input.

This may require revisiting past CETV cases for members with State Pension age after 5 April 2016 and who took a CETV from the scheme before CETV were equalised. The scope of any costs are yet to be determined. Data on historic CETVs is not available to estimate the potential impact. It is expected that this will be a relatively small uplift for a relatively small subset of members (i.e. those who took a CETV and are in scope for a top up).

McCloud Judgment

Following the Court of Appeal, the McCloud judgment was handed down in December 2018 which concluded that the transitional protections introduced in 2015 were discriminatory on the basis of age. The UK Government subsequently announced plans to address the discrimination across the UK public sector pension schemes including the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

The past service costs have been estimated to take into account the impact of the McCloud judgment and have been included within the Pension Fund since 2018/19. These estimates have been updated to reflect the remedy outlined by the UK Government and the requisite changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations laid down by Welsh Ministers which came into force on 1 October 2023.

The Firefighters' Pensions (Remediable Service) (Wales) Regulations 2023 were laid and came into force on 1 October 2023 to make provision for Scheme Managers to implement the changes necessary to effect remedy and these are required to be completed within an 18-month period. Due to the complexity and volume of calculations, the Service did not fully meet the deadline of 31 March 2025.

Due to the inability to meet the statutory requirements of Section 29 of the PSPJOA 2022, the matter was reported to The Pensions Regulator (TPR).

During 2025/26 the Service continued to implement these changes and this exercise has been materially concluded for members assessed to be at detriment. The estimated financial impact was included within the 2020 revaluation and work continues to fully address all residual cases.

Matthews / O'Brien

Following a lengthy legal process, the judgment in the case of O'Brien vs Ministry of Justice was issued during 2019. This found that the decision to limit the period from which a part-time employee could join the pension scheme was erroneous and eligible employees should be permitted to join the relevant scheme with effect from the start of their contracts.

This judgment has national implications for staff who are employed as retained firefighters whose contract of employment commenced before 1 July 2000 or those who have not yet received the full opportunity to purchase past service to which they were entitled.

The Welsh Ministers have made amendments to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2007 (Modified) to provide a mechanism for this matter to be addressed. The Firefighters' Pension Schemes and Compensation Scheme (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2024, was made and laid in January and came into force on 1 February 2024. All eligible persons will be afforded the opportunity of buying back pension entitlements within the timescales specified within the order.

The full financial impact of the updated regulations cannot be fully calculated although an estimate has been included within the 2020 valuation of the Authority's pension scheme liabilities undertaken by the Government's Actuary Department (GAD).

The tables below provide additional details regarding the pension schemes:

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPS 2024/25 £'000	General Fund Transfers	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
		Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		
		Cost of Services		
1,033	1,870	Current Service Cost	704	1,010
0	0	Past Service Costs	0	0
51	0	Administration Expenses	54	0
		Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure		
(16)	10,810	Net Interest Expense	(18)	11,490
0	0	Transfers out of scheme	0	0
0	(10)	Transfers in to scheme	0	800
0	0	Curtailments	0	0
1,068	**12,670**	**Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to Provision of Services**	**740**	**13,300**
		Other Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		
		Remeasurement of the net defined benefit/liability comprising:		
1,894	0	Return on Plan Assets (excluding Interest)	706	0
(51)	(530)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses arising on Changes in Demographic Assumptions	325	0
(6,176)	(25,240)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses arising on Changes in Financial Assumptions	(4)	(7,320)
0	(60)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses - experience	0	29,930
(4,333)	**(25,830)**	**Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement**	**1,027**	**22,610**
		Movement in Reserves Statement		
(1,068)	(12,670)	Reversal of net charges made to the surplus or deficit on the Provision of Services for Post Employment Benefits in accordance with the Code	(740)	(13,300)
		Actual amounts charged to the General Fund for pensions in the year		
0	10,370	Retirement Benefits payable to Pensioners	0	11,430
658	0	Employer Contributions Payable to the scheme	693	0

The amount included on the Balance Sheet arising from the Authority's obligation, in respect of its defined benefit plans are as follows:

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
(35,728)	(208,100)	Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(37,140)	(232,580)
40,950		Fair Value of plan assets	41,599	
5,222	**(208,100)**	**Sub Total**	**4,459**	**(232,580)**
(5,265)		Effect of IAS19 / IFRIC 14	(4,503)	
(43)	**(208,100)**	**Net surplus / (liability) arising from defined benefit obligation**	**(44)**	**(232,580)**

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Movement in the Value of Scheme Assets	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
41,630	0	Opening Fair Value of Scheme Assets	40,950	0
2,021	0	Interest Income	2,387	0
		Remeasurement Gain/Loss		
(1,894)	0	The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	(706)	0
658	12,440	Contributions from employer	693	13,740
437	0	Contributions from employees into the scheme	462	0
(1,851)	(12,440)	Benefits/transfer paid	(2,133)	(13,740)
(51)	0	Administration Expenses	(54)	0
40,950	**0**	**Closing value of scheme assets**	**41,599**	**0**

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Movement in the Fair Value of Scheme Liabilities	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
(40,392)	(231,610)	Opening Balance as at 1 April	(35,728)	(208,100)
(1,033)	(1,870)	Current Service Cost	(704)	(1,010)
0	(10)	Transfers In	0	(800)
(1,944)	(10,810)	Interest Costs	(2,058)	(11,490)
(437)	(2,070)	Contributions from scheme participants	(462)	(2,310)
		Remeasurement Gains and losses		
51	60	Actuarial Gains/losses - experience	(506)	(29,930)
6,176	530	Actuarial Gains/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	181	0
1,851	25,240	Actuarial Gains/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	4	7,320
0	12,440	Benefits/ transfers paid	2,133	13,740
0	0	Curtailments	0	0
0	0	Past Service Cost	0	0
(35,728)	**(208,100)**	**Balance at 31 March**	**(37,140)**	**(232,580)**

Local Government Pension Scheme: Assets Comprised Of:

Quoted 2024/25 £'000	Fair Value of Scheme Assets	Quoted 2025/26 £'000
	Cash & Cash Equivalents	
0	Cash Accounts	3,786
0	Temporary Investments	0
0	**Subtotal Cash and Cash Equivalents**	**3,786**
	Equity Securities	
6,296	Global Quoted	6,697
0	Emerging Markets	0
6,296	**Subtotal Equities**	**6,697**
	Bonds	
5,409	Overseas Other	6,656
9,685	Liability-Driven Investment	11,981
15,094	**Subtotal Bonds**	**18,637**
	Property	
1,550	UK	1,331
209	Overseas	0
1,759	**Subtotal Property**	**1,331**
	Alternatives	
6,298	Hedge Funds	0
3,239	Private Equity	6,573
123	Infrastructure	3,328
4,808	Timber and Agriculture	83
1,380	Diversified Growth Fund	0
1,953	Private Credit	1,165
17,801	**Subtotal Alternatives**	**11,149**
40,950	**Totals Assets**	**41,600**

Scheme assets are valued using fair values techniques based on the characteristics of each instrument, where possible using market-based information.

Further information can be found within the Clwyd Pension Fund's Annual Report, publicised on their website - mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk/home/investments-and-governance/annual-reports/

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been valued on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method which assesses the future liabilities of the fund discounted to their present value.

The Firefighters' Scheme has been valued by the Government Actuary's Department.

The LGPS liabilities have been valued by Mercer, an independent firm of actuaries and are based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 1 April 2023.

2024/25	LGPS	2025/26
	Mortality Assumptions	
	Longevity at retirement for current pensioners:	
21.1	Men	21.0
23.6	Women	23.6
	Longevity at retirement for future pensioners	
22.4	Men	22.1
25.4	Women	25.2
	Other Assumptions	
2.6%	Rate of Inflation	2.9%
3.9%	Rate of Increase in Salaries	4.2%
2.7%	Rate of Increase in Pensions	3.0%
5.9%	Rate of Discounting Scheme Liabilities	6.2%
2.6%	CARE Revaluation Rate	2.9%

2024/25	Firefighters Pension Scheme	2025/26
	Mortality Assumptions	
	Longevity at retirement for current pensioners:	
21.3	Men	21.3
21.3	Women	21.3
	Longevity at retirement for future pensioners	
22.7	Men	22.8
22.7	Women	22.8
	Other Assumptions	
2.7%	Rate of Inflation	3.0%
3.5%	Rate of Increase in Salaries	3.7%
2.7%	Rate of Increase in Pensions	3.0%
5.7%	Rate of Discounting Scheme Liabilities	6.1%
3.5%	CARE Revaluation Rate	3.7%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the above tables.

The sensitivity analyses below are based on reasonably possible changes to assumptions at the reporting period end, with each assumption varied independently. For example, longevity assumes changes in life expectancy for men and women. While such isolated changes are unlikely in practice, and some assumptions may be interrelated, the estimates follow the scheme's accounting policies—using the projected unit credit method on an actuarial basis. The methods and assumptions used are consistent with those applied in the previous period.

Impact of Assumptions on the obligation - LGPS

	As Reported	+0.5% p.a. discount	+0.25% p.a. inflation	+0.25% p.a. pay growth	1 year increase in life expectancy	+/-1% change in 2023/24 investment returns	
						+1%	-1%
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Liabilities	37,140	34,597	38,481	37,348	37,898	37,140	37,140
Assets	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(42,010)	(41,188)
Deficit (surplus)	(4,459)	(7,002)	(3,118)	(4,251)	(3,701)	(4,870)	(4,048)
Projected Service Cost for next year	699	589	759	699	718	699	699
Projected Net Interest Cost for next year	(307)	(502)	(223)	(293)	(259)	(332)	(281)

	As Reported	Discount rate on liabilities 0.5% increase	Increase in salaries 0.5% increase	Life expectancy 1 year increase	Increase in pensions 0.5% increaase
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Impact	-6.50%	1%	2.50%	6.50%
Firefighters Pension Scheme	(232,580)	(217,462)	(234,906)	(238,395)	(247,698)

Impact on the Authority's Cashflow

The cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services is recognised when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required to be made against the levy is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/ retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.

31 NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Authority has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which ensures the Authority has measures in place to manage financial risks. The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 was formally approved at a meeting on 28 April 2025. The Strategy sets out the Prudential Indicators (PI's) for the year. During the year, quarterly reports detail the progress against the strategy and if necessary a revision of the PI's.

At year end, a final report sets out how the Authority has performed during the year. How the Authority manages risks arising from financial instruments is detailed in the treasury reports presented to the Audit Committee and can be accessed from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service website - www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

The Authority's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including:

Credit Risk

This is the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Authority.

The highest credit risk is for investments and these are managed through the Treasury Management Strategy, which sets out the parameters for the management of risks associated with Financial Instruments and emphasises that priority is to be given to security and liquidity, rather than yield. The Authority's policy on treasury investments is to place short term cash surpluses into bank call accounts until required. The Authority does not have long term investments. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, with selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss.

Liquidity Risk

This is the possibility that the Authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments.

The Authority monitors its cash balance to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the Authority has ready access to borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board and so there is no perceived risk that the Authority will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead, the risk is that the Authority will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The Authority will always have a borrowing requirement as it does not hold significant cash or reserves and only has limited access to capital grant funding. The maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing is as follows:

2025-26	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31 March 2026 £000	31 March 2026 %
Less than 1 year	60%	0%	2,000	13%
Between 1 and 2 years	45%	0%	1,700	11%
Between 2 and 5 years	45%	0%	1,800	11%
Between 5 and 10 years	75%	0%	2,000	13%
More than 10 years	100%	0%	8,260	52%
Total			**15,760**	**100%**

2024-25	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2025 %
Less than 1 year	60%	0%	9,300	49%
Between 1 and 2 years	45%	0%	1,500	8%
Between 2 and 5 years	45%	0%	1,200	6%
Between 5 and 10 years	75%	0%	0	0%
More than 10 years	100%	0%	7,070	37%
Total			**19,070**	**100%**

Market Risk

This is the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements.

As at 31 March 2026, the Authority held market loans of £2m (2024/25: £5m).

The Authority is exposed to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Authority, depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates would have the following effects:

- Borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise;
- Borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the borrowing will fall (no impact on revenue balances);
- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall (no impact on revenue balances).

Borrowings are not carried at fair value on the balance sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and affect the General Fund Balance.

The Authority has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. During periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate loans will be repaid early to limit exposure to losses.

32 CONTINGENT LIABILITY

Pension Claims

Following a lengthy legal process, the judgment in the case of O'Brien vs Ministry of Justice was issued during 2019. This found that the decision to limit the period from which a part-time employee could join the pension scheme was erroneous and eligible employees should be permitted to join the relevant scheme with effect from the start of their contracts.

This judgment has national implications for staff who are employed as retained firefighters whose contract of employment commenced before 6 April 2000 including those who have not yet previously received the full opportunity to purchase past service to which they were entitled.

The Welsh Ministers have made amendments to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2007 (Modified) to provide a mechanism for this matter to be addressed. The Firefighters' Pension Schemes and Compensation Scheme (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2024, was made and laid in January and came into force on 1 February 2024. All eligible persons will be afforded the opportunity of buying back pension entitlements within the timescales specified within the order.

The full financial impact of the updated regulations cannot be fully calculated although an estimate has been included within the 2020 valuation of the Authority's pension scheme liabilities undertaken by the Government's Actuary Department (GAD).

Employment Tribunal

At the year-end there were no matters that required financial recognition.

33 CONTINGENT ASSET

At the year-end there were no matters that required recognition.

FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION FUND ACCOUNT

Firefighters Pension Fund Account for the year ended 31 March 2026

This statement presents the financial position of the Firefighters' Pension Fund Account, detailing whether the Authority has a payable or receivable balance with the Welsh Government to ensure the account is balanced. Additionally, it provides information on the net assets of the fund.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Contributions Receivable:	
(4,906)	Employer normal contributions	(5,437)
0	Employer ill health charge	0
0	Employer backdated contributions	0
(2,067)	Members normal contributions	(2,309)
(100)	Members backdated contributions	(304)
(321)	Transfers In	(855)
(7,394)	**Total Contributions**	**(8,905)**
	Benefits Payable:	
9,737	Pension Payments	10,872
2,437	Commutation of Pensions and Lump Sum retirement benefits	3,332
0	Backdated Commutation Payments	0
	Payments to and on account of leavers:	
88	Transfers out	16
12,262	**Total Benefits**	**14,220**
4,868	Deficit for the year before grants receivables from the Welsh Government	5,315
(4,868)	Top Up grant payable to/(from) Welsh Government	(5,315)
0	**Net Amount (Payable)/Receivable for Year**	**0**

Net Assets Statement as at 31 March 2026

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Current assets	
(655)	Amount owed (from)/to the General Fund	(3,765)
(655)	**Total Current Assets**	**(3,765)**
	Current Liabilities	
655	Top Up grant payable to/(from) Welsh Government	3,765
655	**Total Current Liabilities**	**3,765**

Notes to the Firefighters' Pension Fund Account

The Fund, established on 1 April 2007 under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) Order 2007, encompasses the 1992, 2007, and 2015 Firefighters' Pension Schemes and is administered by the Authority. This is an unfunded scheme with no investment assets. Each year, the fund is balanced to zero through the receipt of a pension top-up grant from the Welsh Government in the event of a deficit, or by remitting any surplus back to the Welsh Government.

Employee and employer contributions are paid into the Fund, from which payments to pensioners are made. Employee's and employer's contribution levels are based on percentages of pensionable pay set nationally by the Welsh Government and subject to revaluation by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) on a four yearly basis or as otherwise directed by HM Treasury.

Transfers in to the scheme are a transfer of pension benefits from another pension scheme, for new or existing employees and transfers out are transfer of benefits for employees who have left the Authority and joined another pension scheme.

The Authority is responsible for paying the employer's contributions into the fund. These are the costs that are included in the accounts for the Authority.

At the beginning of the financial year an assessment is made as to the amount of Top Up grant required from the Welsh Government. The estimate includes an assessment of the number of firefighters due to retire within the year, based on age and years' service.

Contribution Rates

As per the Firefighters' Pension Regulations, the employer's contribution rate for the 2015 scheme will be 31.0% of pensionable pay, effective from 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2025 (up from 27.3% in 2023/24). The employee contribution rates vary according to pensionable pay bands, detailed below:

Pensionable Pay Band	Contribution Rate % (01 Apr - 31 Aug)
Up to £27,818	11.0
£27,819 to £51,515	12.9
£51,516 to £142,500	13.5
More than £142,501	14.5

New employee contribution rates came into effect from 1 September 2025, with rates determined by reference to grade rather than salary band. These rates were applied from the September salary payments onwards, were not applied retrospectively, and no member owes any arrears of contributions as a result of these changes.

Duty System	Grade / Role	Contribution Rate % (from 01 Sept)
Retained	All	13.0
Wholetime	Firefighter	13.0
Wholetime	Crew Manager	13.2
Wholetime	Watch Manager	13.2
Wholetime	Station Manager	13.7
Wholetime	Group Manager	13.7
Wholetime	Area Manager	14.2
Wholetime	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	14.5
Wholetime	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	14.5
Wholetime	Chief Fire Officer	14.5

The Firefighters' Pension Fund Account does not take account of liabilities for pensions and other benefits after the period end as this is the responsibility of the Authority. Details of the long term pension obligations can be found in Note 30 to the core financial statements.

Appendix 1

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Authority's transactions for the 2025/26 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2026. The Authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, which require the accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices, under section 21 of the Local Government Act 2003, primarily comprise of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025/26 supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments. The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

In relation to a policy regarding capitalisation of expenditure, our practice is to operate on the basis of the nature of expenditure rather than a prescribed level of expenditure.

2. ACCRUALS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

In the revenue accounts, income and expenditure are accounted for net of VAT (unless the VAT is irrecoverable) in the year they arise, not when cash payments are made or received. This aligns with IAS 1, which mandates the accrual basis of accounting to ensure comparability and a true and fair view of financial performance and position.

- **Expenses**: Recorded when services are received, not when payments are made. Income from customers is recognised when goods or services are provided.
- **Supplies**: Recorded as expenditure when consumed. If received but not yet used, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- **Interest**: Accounted for using the effective interest rate method, rather than the cash flows specified by the contract.
- **Debtors and Creditors**: If revenue and expenditure are recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor is recorded in the Balance Sheet. If debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down, and a charge is made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

3. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash includes cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions that can be withdrawn without penalty within 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature within three months of acquisition and can be easily converted to cash with minimal risk.

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and are part of the Authority's cash management.

4. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS, CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND ESTIMATES AND ERRORS

Prior period adjustments may occur due to changes in accounting policies or to correct material errors. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, affecting the current and future years, and do not result in prior period adjustments.

Changes in accounting policies are made only when required by proper accounting practices or when they provide more reliable or relevant information about the Authority's financial position or performance. These changes are applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for prior periods as if the new policy had always been applied. Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

5. CHARGES TO REVENUE FOR NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Services, support services, and trading accounts are charged an estimate of the cost of holding non-current assets during the year. This includes:

- **Depreciation**: Attributable to the assets used by the relevant service.
- **Revaluation and Impairment Losses**: On assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the revaluation reserve to offset the losses.
- **Amortisation**: Of intangible assets attributable to the service.

The Authority is not required to raise a levy to fund these costs. Instead, it makes an annual contribution from revenue towards reducing its overall borrowing requirement, calculated on a prudent basis. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses, and amortisation are replaced by this contribution in the General Fund balance (Minimum Revenue Provision) through an adjusting transaction with the capital adjustment account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

6. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Benefits payable during employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end and include wages, salaries, paid leave, bonuses, and non-monetary benefits (e.g., cars). These are recognised as expenses in the year employees provide services to the Authority.

An accrual is made for holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g., time off in lieu) earned but not taken before the year-end, which employees can carry forward to the next financial year. This accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year. The accrual is charged to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement to the accumulated absences account, ensuring holiday entitlements are charged to revenue in the year the leave is taken.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Authority are members of two separate pension schemes:

- **Firefighters' Pension Scheme**: Administered by Dyfed Pension Fund, Carmarthenshire County Council.
- **Local Government Pension Scheme**: Administered by Clwyd Pension Fund, Flintshire County Council.

Both schemes provide defined benefits (retirement lump sums and pensions) earned as employees work for the Authority.

Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS)

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme is an unfunded defined benefits scheme with no assets or investment income.

- **Liabilities**: Included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover, and projected earnings.
- **Discount Rate**: Liabilities are discounted to current prices using a rate based on Government bond yields plus an additional margin.

Service cost:

- **Current Service Cost:** Increase in liabilities from service earned in year, allocated in the CIES to the services for which employees worked.
- **Past Service Cost:** Increase in liabilities from scheme amendments or curtailments related to earlier years, debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the CIES.
- **Net Interest:** Expense that arises from the passage of time on the net defined benefit liability. It is calculated by applying the discount rate to the net defined benefit liability at the beginning of the period. This expense is charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Essentially, it represents the interest cost of having a pension liability over time.

Remeasurements:

- **Actuarial Gains and Losses:** Changes in net pension liability due to updated assumptions or events not matching previous actuary assumptions, charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

- **Contributions paid to the Fund:** Cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund Balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension funds or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Local Government Pension Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme:

- **Liabilities**: Included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover, and projected earnings for current employees.
- **Discount Rate**: Liabilities are discounted to current prices using a rate based on corporate bonds.
- **Assets**: The assets of the Clwyd Pension Fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:
    - Quoted securities: current bid price
    - Unquoted securities: professional estimate
    - Unitised securities: current bid price
    - Property: market value

The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

Service cost comprising:

- **Current Service Cost**: The increase in liabilities due to years of service earned this year, allocated to the services for which the employees worked in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- **Past Service Cost**: The increase in liabilities due to a scheme amendment or curtailment related to years of service earned in earlier years, debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of corporate costs.
- **Net Interest on the Net Defined Benefit Liability/(Asset)**: The change during the period in the net defined benefit liability/(asset) due to the passage of time, charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability/(asset) at the beginning of the period, considering any changes during the period due to contributions and benefit payments.

Remeasurements comprising:

- **Return on Plan Assets**: Excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure.

- **Actuarial Gains and Losses**: Changes in the net pensions liability due to events not coinciding with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or updates to the actuaries' assumptions, charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure.
- **Contributions Paid to the Clwyd Pension Fund**: Cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities, not accounted for as an expense.

Statutory Provisions

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. This means there are transfers to and from the pensions reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance on the pensions reserve measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of accounting for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 governs how the long-term liabilities which exist in relation to pension costs should be reported. FRAs in England and Wales are required to produce their financial statements in accordance with IAS19.

Discretionary Benefits:

The Authority has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise from such awards are accrued in the year of the decision and accounted for using the same policies as applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

7. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

Events after the Balance Sheet reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the Balance Sheet date and the date when the statement of accounts are authorised for issue. These events are classified into two types:

- **Events Providing Evidence of Conditions at the End of the Reporting Period -** If the event provides evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period, the statement of accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.

- **Events Indicative of Conditions Arising After the Reporting Period -** If the event indicates conditions that arose after the reporting period, the statement of accounts is not adjusted. However, if these events would have a material effect, their nature and estimated financial impact are disclosed in the notes.

8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

A Financial instrument is 'any contract that creates a financial asset for one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument for another'.

Initial Measurement and Carrying Amount:

- **Financial Liabilities (Loans)**: Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. The annual interest paid is based on the carrying amount of the loan multiplied by the effective interest rate.
- **Financial Assets (Investments)**: Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. The annual interest received is based on the carrying amount of the investment multiplied by the effective interest rate.

For all loans and investments, the amounts presented in the Balance Sheet are the principal outstanding plus any accrued interest for the year.

Recognition and Measurement

- **Financial Liabilities**: Recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. Annual charges for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability multiplied by the effective interest rate. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

For most of the borrowings that the Authority has, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest); and interest charged to the CIES is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Financial assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow characteristics. The Authority holds financial assets measured at:

- Amortised Cost
- Fair Value Through Profit or Loss (FVPL)

The Authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows, so financial assets are classified as amortised cost.

Financial assets measured at amortised cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value.
These assets are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument.

For most financial assets held by the Authority, the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest), and the interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of a financial asset are credited or debited to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the CIES.

9. FOREIGN CURRENCY TRANSACTIONS

When the Authority enters into a transaction in a foreign currency, the transaction is converted into sterling at the exchange rate on the date the transaction occurs. If there are amounts in foreign currency outstanding at the year-end, they are reconverted at the spot exchange rate on 31 March. Any resulting gains or losses are recognised in the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

10. ACCOUNTING FOR GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Government grants and third-party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Authority when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the Authority will comply with the conditions attached to the payments, and
- the grants or contributions will be received.

Recognition: Amounts recognised as due are not credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement until the conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied.

Unsatisfied Conditions: Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as creditors.

Satisfied Conditions: When the conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (for attributable revenue grants and contributions) or to Taxation & Non-specific Grant Income (for non-ring fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

11. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Authority as a result of past events, such as software licences, is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Authority.

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Under the revised Code of Practice, effective from 1 April 2025, intangible assets can no longer be revalued. In accordance with the Code, all intangible assets must now be held at depreciated historic cost, as the revaluation model has been withdrawn. The Authority does not hold any intangible assets that met the criteria for revaluation under the previous code; therefore, there are no transitional impacts arising from this change for 2025/26.

The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that it might be impaired. Any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

When expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses, and disposal gains and losses are not allowed to impact the General Fund balance. These gains and losses are reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the capital adjustment account. For any sale proceeds greater than £10,000, the amounts are posted to the capital receipts reserve.

12. INVENTORIES

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using the First-In, First-Out (FIFO) costing formula

13. LEASES

The Authority applies IFRS 16 Leases and recognises most leases on the Balance Sheet in the form of right-of-use (ROU) assets and corresponding lease liabilities. This reflects the Authority's right to use leased assets and the obligation to make lease payments over the lease term.

Leases are assessed at inception to determine whether a contract conveys the right to use an identified asset in exchange for consideration. Where a contract contains both land and buildings, each component is assessed separately in accordance with the Code.

Lessee Accounting

ROU assets are recognised at the value of the lease liability, adjusted for any lease prepayments, initial direct costs or obligations to restore the site, and reduced by any lease incentives. Lease liabilities are measured at the present value of future lease payments, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, or the Authority's incremental borrowing rate where this cannot be readily determined.

Lease payments include fixed payments, in substance fixed payments, amounts under residual value guarantees, payments under options the Authority is reasonably certain to exercise, and any penalties for early termination. ROU assets are subsequently measured using the IFRS 16 cost model.

Low-cost lease exemption: The low-cost exemption is set at £10,000, in line with the de minimis expenditure level for Property, Plant & Equipment. Leases below this value will be excluded from IFRS16.

Short-term lease exemption: Leases with a lease term of 12 months or less at the commencement date, and which do not include a purchase option, are treated as short-term leases. Where this exemption is applied, such leases are excluded from IFRS 16 recognition, with lease payments charged to expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Intangible asset exemption: IFRS 16 does not apply to leases of intangible assets (e.g., software licences), which continue to be accounted for under the relevant intangible asset policies.

Use of portfolio of leases with reasonably similar characteristics: The Authority will apply the portfolio expedient for photocopiers and similar machines (e.g., MFDs, franking machines). These leases have similar characteristics in function, cost, and agreements, and will fall within the low-cost exemption.

Depreciation and Interest

ROU assets are depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life or the lease term. Lease payments are split between a finance charge recognised in the CIES, and a reduction of the lease liability.

Capital accounting requirements apply in the same way as for owned non-current assets. Statutory adjustments ensure that depreciation and interest charges do not affect the General Fund, replaced instead by statutory financing entries.

Other Arrangements Containing a Lease

Arrangements that do not legally constitute a lease may still fall within the scope of IFRS 16 if they grant control over the use of an identified asset. Such arrangements are reviewed and accounted for consistently with IFRS 16 principles.

Finance Leases (Lessee)

A lease is classified as a finance lease where it transfers substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership. In such cases, the asset and liability are recognised at the lower of fair value or the present value of minimum lease payments. Depreciation is charged over the lease term unless ownership transfers to the Authority. Finance lease accounting follows the same principles as the ROU model for depreciation, liability reduction and interest recognition.

Instead of raising a levy for depreciation or impairment losses, the Authority makes an annual revenue contribution towards the capital investment, in line with statutory requirements. This is reflected through an adjustment between the General Fund and the Capital Adjustment Account.

The Authority as Lessor

Finance Leases Assets disposed of under finance leases shall be written out of the Balance Sheet and an amount recognised in the Balance Sheet as a receivable debtor that reflects the net investment in the lease as defined by the appropriate accounting standard.

The capital element of any rental due under a finance lease shall be accounted for as a capital receipt, the debtor and the equivalent liability being written down by that amount. The finance element shall be treated as revenue income.

14. PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Assets that have physical substance and are used for producing or supplying goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes, and are expected to be used for more than one financial year, are classified as Property, Plant, and Equipment.

Recognition

Expenditure on acquiring, creating, or enhancing Property, Plant, and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis if it is probable that future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the Authority and the cost can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential (e.g., repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when incurred.

A de minimis expenditure level of £10,000 has been set for Property, Plant, and Equipment. Expenditure below this level will not be subject to capital accounting requirements. If an asset is revalued below £10,000, any associated expenditure and depreciation will be written out, and the asset will be removed from the Fixed Asset Register.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, which includes the purchase price, any costs necessary to bring the asset to its intended location and condition, and an initial estimate of dismantling and site restoration costs. The Authority does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred while assets are under construction. The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be their fair value.

Assets are carried on the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Land & Buildings: Offices/Workshops – current value (Existing Use Value)
- Land & Buildings: Fire Stations – current value (Depreciated Replacement Cost)
- Assets under construction - historical cost
- All other assets - current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (Existing Use Value).

If there is no market-based evidence of current value due to the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value. For non-property assets with short useful lives or low values, depreciated historical cost is used as a proxy for current value.

Indexation of Property, Plant & Equipment

The Authority applies indexation to relevant Property, Plant & Equipment to keep asset values accurate between formal valuations, in line with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice. Indexation updates values in years without a full revaluation so that the Balance Sheet continues to reflect current value, but it does not replace the requirement for full revaluations within the five-year cycle or the need to assess assets for possible impairment. The next full revaluation for the relevant asset classes is scheduled to take place in 2027/28.

Indexation is applied annually to assets measured at current value, including Offices and Workshops (valued at Existing Use Value), Fire Stations and training towers (valued using Depreciated Replacement Cost) and Land. The Authority uses recognised external indices aligned with RICS and public-sector valuation guidance, with adjustment factors reviewed alongside the Authority's valuer.

The index is applied to the Opening Net Book Value (NBV) at 1 April to produce an updated carrying amount before depreciation. Increases in value are credited to the Revaluation Reserve unless they reverse earlier losses charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). Decreases are charged against any available Revaluation Reserve balance for the asset, with any further reduction recognised in the CIES. This ensures consistent treatment with full revaluations and impairment adjustments.

Indexation is only applied where the resulting change is material. If indices display unusual volatility or do not appropriately reflect an asset category, a valuation review may be completed instead. Where indicators of impairment exist, a separate impairment review is undertaken regardless of indexation.

Depreciation is based on the indexed NBV. For componentised buildings, indexation is allocated proportionately across all components so that the total indexed value reflects the uplift in the asset's Opening NBV.

When applying indexation, the Authority may process the adjustment either through proportional restatement of the gross cost and accumulated depreciation, or through the elimination of accumulated depreciation with a corresponding adjustment to the gross carrying amount. Both approaches are permitted under the Code.

Under the proportional restatement approach, the Authority updates asset values by uplifting both the gross carrying amount and the accumulated depreciation proportionately so that the indexed movement is applied consistently across all components of the asset. This method retains the existing relationship between gross cost and accumulated depreciation, ensuring that the indexed Net Book Value is achieved without eliminating prior depreciation. It maintains continuity in the depreciation profile and is consistent with the principles for subsequent measurement.

Impairments

Assets are assessed at each year-end for indications of impairment. If indications exist and the differences are material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated. If this is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Impairment losses are accounted for by writing down the carrying amount of the asset against any revaluation gains in the revaluation reserve (up to the amount of the accumulated gains). If there is no balance in the revaluation reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

If an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for all Property, Plant, and Equipment assets by systematically allocating their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. The useful economic life of assets is as follows:

Land	Infinite (no depreciation)
Buildings	Useful life of the property (as estimated by the valuer)
Buildings (leased)	Term of lease
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	5 - 20 years
Intangible Assets	5 years

Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis, with acquisitions being depreciated in the year following purchase. A full year's depreciation is charged in the year of disposal. Buildings are depreciated using componentisation, where an estimate is made of the useful life of each component of the building, and a weighted average is used to calculate the annual charge.The percentages used are:

Buildings – fire stations	2.05% - 2.22%
Buildings – offices/workshops	1.98% - 2.15%

Depreciation is charged within the income and expenditure account. This amount is credited to the General Fund Balance and has a neutral impact on the contributions made by the constituent authorities. The Authority is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards reducing its overall borrowing requirement.

Depreciation, revaluation, and impairment losses and amortisation are replaced by the contribution from General Fund Balances (MRP) through an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with the difference between current value depreciation and historical cost depreciation being transferred each year from the revaluation reserve to the capital adjustment account.

Disposals

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than continued use, it is reclassified as an asset held for sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less costs to sell. Subsequent decreases to fair value less costs to sell are posted to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services. Depreciation is not charged on assets held for sale.

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount in the Balance Sheet is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the revaluation reserve are transferred to the capital adjustment account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts remains within the capital receipts reserve and can only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Authority's underlying need to borrow. Receipts are appropriated to the reserve from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against the levy, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

15. PROVISIONS, CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

Provisions

Provisions are made when an event has occurred on or before the Balance Sheet date:

- that gives the Authority a present obligation
- that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and
- where a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

If it is unclear whether an event has occurred on or before the Balance Sheet date, it is considered a present obligation if, based on all available evidence, it is more likely than not that a present obligation exists at the Balance Sheet date. The present obligation can be legal or constructive.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Authority has an obligation. They are measured at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the Balance Sheet date, considering relevant risks and uncertainties. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year. If it becomes less probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

If some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g., through an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Authority settles the obligation.

Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises when an event has occurred that gives the Authority a possible obligation, which will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control. Contingent liabilities also arise in situations where a provision would otherwise be made, but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability. Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are disclosed in a note to the accounts.

Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises when an event has occurred that gives the Authority a possible asset, which will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control.

Contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential

16. RESERVES

The Authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. These reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund balance. When expenditure is financed from a reserve, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year, affecting the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then transferred back into the General Fund balance, ensuring there is no net charge against the levy for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are maintained to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement, and employee benefits. These reserves do not represent usable resources for the Authority and are explained in the relevant policies.

17. VAT

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from HMRC. VAT receivable is excluded from income

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Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

Audit of Accounts Report – North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Audit year: 2025-26

Date issued: September 2026

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Contents

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Introduction

Catherine Mealing-Jones

Auditor General for Wales

As the newly appointed Auditor General for Wales, I am pleased to share my Audit of Accounts Report. The Report summarises the main findings from my audit of your 2025-26 annual report and accounts. My team have already discussed these findings with the Head of Finance and Procurement.

My team have substantially completed the audit work as set out in my Audit Plan dated June 2026. The remaining tasks involve continuous planning and review.

Since my Audit Plan, I have updated materiality to reflect the 2025-26 accounts. I have not identified any new audit risks. My response to previously identified risks is set out in **Appendix 1**.

I am required to provide an opinion on whether the accounts have been properly prepared, and give a true and fair view, in all material respects. My proposed audit opinion and basis for it is outlined on page 8.

It is the responsibility of those charged with governance, i.e. the Authority to address any matters raised in my report and provide me with a Letter of Representation.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the officers and staff of North Wales FRA for their cooperation throughout the audit process which has been invaluable in completing this audit effectively.

Your audit at a glance

We intend to issue an **unqualified opinion** on the accounts

See **Appendix 3**

There are no **other significant matters** to report

See **Audit findings**

There are **uncorrected misstatements** in the accounts which we wish to draw to your attention.

See **Audit findings**

We have raised **One recommendation** as a result of our work

See **Appendix 5**

Subject to no further material issues being identified. We are aiming to certify your accounts ahead of the deadline of **30 September 2026**.

Materiality

I use professional judgement to set a materiality threshold to identify and correct misstatements that could affect users' decisions, considering both financial errors and disclosure requirements according to the applicable accounting framework and laws. My team updates materiality throughout the audit and I include in this report matters that exceed my reporting threshold, as set out below:

Materiality	Reporting threshold (trivial)
Set at 2% of gross expenditure based upon 2025-26 draft financial statements	Set at 5% of materiality
North Wales FRA £1,061,000	**North Wales FRA £53,000**
Fire Fighter Pension Fund £284,000	**Fire Fighter Pension Fund £14,000**

There are some areas of the accounts that may be of more importance to the user of the accounts. We confirm lower materiality levels for these:

Senior Officer Remuneration Disclosures	Related party disclosures
£1,000	£10,000

Audit Findings

Misstatements

A misstatement arises where information in the accounts is not in accordance with accounting standards.

Uncorrected misstatements

We set out below the misstatements we identified in the accounts, which have been discussed with management but remain uncorrected. We request that these misstatements be corrected.

If you decide not to correct these misstatements, we ask that you provide us with the reasons in writing for not correcting them:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Corrected misstatements

During our audit, we identified misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

These are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Other significant issues

International Standard on Auditing 260 requires us to communicate with those charged with governance. We must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of North Wales FRA's financial reporting process.

There were no such issues identified during the audit.

Proposed audit opinion

Audit opinion

We intend to issue an unqualified audit opinion on this year's accounts once you have provided us with a Letter of Representation (see below).

Our proposed audit report is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Letter of representation

A Letter of Representation is a formal letter in which you confirm to us the accuracy and completeness of information provided to us during the audit. Some of this information is required by auditing standards; other information may relate specifically to your audit.

The letter we are requesting you to sign is included in **Appendix 4,** the contents of which are in line with our standard request for representations

Recommendations

We have made a recommendation during the audit, which is set out in **Appendix 5** along with management's response to the recommendation.

We will monitor progress against the recommendations during next year's audit.

Audit team and ethical compliance

The main members of my team who carried out the audit work, together with their contact details, are summarised in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1: My local audit team

Engagement Lead	Kate Havard Kate.Havard@audit.wales
Audit Manager	Carwyn Rees Carwyn.Rees@audit.wales
Audit Lead	Kieran Vickery Kieran.Vickery@audit.wales

Compliance with ethical standards

We confirm that:

- we have complied with the ethical standards we are required to follow in carrying out our work;
- we have remained independent of yourselves;
- our objectivity has not been compromised; and
- we have no relationships that could undermine our independence or objectivity.

Appendix 1 – Audit risks and outcomes

My Audit Plan set out the risks of material misstatement for the audit of North Wales FRA's accounts. **Exhibit 2** lists these audit risks and sets out how they were addressed as part of the audit. No additional audit risks have been identified since that need to be brought to your attention.

Exhibit 2: Audit risks reported previously, work done and outcome

Audit risk	Work done	Outcome
Risk of management override The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.32-33].	The audit team: • tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements; • reviewed accounting estimates for bias. • Considered if there were any transactions outside of the normal course of business	Audit work did not identify any instances of management override of controls.

Valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus The pension fund liability estimates are based on assumptions and as a result there is a high level of uncertainty in the calculations. The calculation is also sensitive to economic conditions and the impact of legal cases.	The audit team: • Evaluated the actuary's instructions, competence, and the accuracy of the information provided. • Tested the accuracy of the pension fund net liability and disclosures in the financial statements. • Assessed the reasonableness of assumptions and the impact of any legal cases on the net liability.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus.
Valuation of land and buildings The value of land and buildings in the balance sheet is subjective and can change significantly due to economic conditions and revaluation requirements.	The audit team: • assessed the work undertaken by the authority to determine that asset values are not materially misstated.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of land and buildings.
Senior officer remuneration Remuneration paid to senior officers continues to be of high interest and is material by nature. Therefore, there is a risk that even low-value errors in the disclosure could result in a material misstatement.	The audit team: • Understood the movements in the senior management team during 2025-26. • Verified that amounts paid are consistent with evidence and were in accordance with the approved pay policy.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the disclosure of senior officer remuneration.

Related party disclosures There is an increased risk of material misstatement because these disclosures are of significant public interest and are considered material by nature.	The audit team: • Reviewed the Authority's process for identifying related party relationships and associated transactions and balances. • Undertook procedures to confirm the completeness of related party relationships. • Ensured disclosures are complete, accurate, consistent with evidence, and in accordance with the Local Government Code.	Audit work did not identify any issues with Related Party disclosures.

Appendix 2 – Summary of corrections made

During our audit, we identified the following misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

Value of correction	Accounts area	Explanation
£2,192,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Disposals** Reclassification of movement in depreciation to show value of assets that have been disposed. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the historic depreciation of assets that have been disposed during the year.
£850,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Impairments** Reclassification of Impairments due to expenditure that does not impact the valuation due to presided valuation methods. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the movements on assets during the year
£177,000 - £2,133,000	**Note 30 – Defined Benefit Pension Scheme** Various reclassifications between lines within the note. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately reflect movements in pension balances in line with actuarial findings.

Appendix 3 – Proposed audit report

The report of the Auditor General for Wales to the members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of:

- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority;
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund

for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority financial statements comprise the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes, including the material accounting policies.

The Firefighters' Pension Fund Accounts comprise the Fund Account and Net Assets Statement and related notes including the material accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund as at 31 March 2026 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing in the UK (ISAs (UK)) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report.

My staff and I are independent of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the responsible financial officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and my auditor's report thereon. The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for the other information contained within the annual report or accompanying it. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to

determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of my audit:

- the information contained in the Narrative Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26;
- the information given in the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with guidance.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Narrative Report or the Annual Governance Statement.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters, which I report to you, if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.
- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my team;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

Responsibilities of the responsible financial officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts included in the Statement, the responsible financial officer is responsible for:

- the preparation of the statement of accounts, which give a true and fair view and comply with proper practices;
- maintaining proper accounting records;
- internal controls as the responsible financial officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of statements of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- assessing the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible financial officer anticipates that the services provided by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with section 13(2) of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Enquiring of management, internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's policies and procedures concerned with:

    - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
    - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
    - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Considering as an audit team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals.
- Obtaining an understanding of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund.
- Obtaining an understanding of related party relationships.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management and the Authority about actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all audit team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and Firefighters' Pension Fund's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Certificate of completion of audit

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Auditor General for Wales' Code of Audit Practice.

Signature
Auditor General for Wales
Date

1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Appendix 4 – Letter of representation

[Audited body's letterhead]

Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

[date]

Representations regarding the 2025-26 financial statements

This letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for the year ended 31 March 2026, for the purpose of expressing an opinion on their truth and fairness and their proper preparation.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made enquiries as we consider sufficient, we can make the following representations to you.

Management representations

Responsibilities

We have fulfilled our responsibilities for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with legislative requirements and Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26; in particular the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance therewith;
- the design, implementation, maintenance and review of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

Information provided

We have provided you with:

- full access to:
  - all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as books of account and supporting documentation, minutes of meetings and other matters;

  - additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - unrestricted access to staff from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and involves:
  - management;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
  - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements;
- our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others;
- our knowledge of all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements; and
- the identity of all related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware;

Financial statement representations

All transactions, assets and liabilities have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

The methods, the data and the significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed.

All events occurring subsequent to the reporting date which require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted for or disclosed.

All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to the auditor and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions. The effects of uncorrected misstatements identified during the audit are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole. A summary of these items is set out below:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Representations by those charged with governance

We acknowledge that the representations made by management, above, have been discussed with us.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of true and fair financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The financial statements were approved by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on 21 September 2026.

We confirm that we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to you. We confirm that, as far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which you are unaware.

Signed by:	Signed by:
Officer who signs on behalf of management	Member who signs on behalf of those charged with governance
Date:	Date:

Appendix 5 – Recommendation

1. Inventory Management of Fleet Items

The Authority's Technology One software includes an inventory module, which is used for their main stores inventory. This allows automatic calculations of issue prices and valuation of items remaining in stock at the year-end, based on invoices received and issues processed. This is not used for fleet inventory currently, which is maintained by a spreadsheet.

In the testing of issues of fleet inventory, it was identified that some fleet items were being issued at a price which was not consistent with the Authority's accounting policy of 'first in, first out' (FIFO). Whilst this had a trivial impact upon the accounts for 2025-26, it is recommended that the process for inventory management for fleet items is incorporated into the Technology One system to ensure that issue prices and closing inventory values are accurately recorded.

Priority:

Medium

Accepted in full by management:

Yes

Management response:

The Service will review the suitability and efficiency of transitioning fleet inventory management into the TechnologyOne inventory module. The review will be completed by December 2026 to enable full integration by March 2027, where appropriate. If full integration is not considered the most effective solution, an alternative process will be implemented to ensure inventory issues and stock valuations are calculated consistently in line with the Authority's FIFO accounting policy.

Implementation date:

March 2027

Audit quality

Our commitment to audit quality in Audit Wales is absolute. We believe that audit quality is about getting things right first time.

We use a three lines of assurance model to demonstrate how we achieve this. We have established an Audit Quality Committee to co-ordinate and oversee those arrangements. We subject our work to independent scrutiny by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and our Chair of the Board acts as a link to our Board on audit quality. For more information see our latest audit quality report.

Our People

- Selection of right team
- Use of specialists
- Supervisions and review

Arrangements for achieving audit quality Selection of right team

- Audit platform
- Ethics
- Guidance
- Culture
- Learning and development
- Leadership
- Technical support

Independent assurance

- EQRs
- Themed reviews
- Cold reviews
- Root cause analysis
- Peer review
- Audit Quality Committee
- External monitoring

Supporting you

Audit Wales has a range of resources to support the scrutiny of Welsh public bodies, and to support them in continuing to improve the services they provide to the people of Wales.

Visit our website to find:

Our publications which cover our audit work at public bodies.

Information on our upcoming work and forward work programme for performance audit.

Data tools to help you better understand public spending trends.

Details of our Good Practice work and events including the sharing of emerging practice and insights from our audit work.

Our newsletter which provides you with regular updates on our public service audit work, good practice, and events.

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

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Website: www.audit.wales

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

This statement shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (grants, contributions etc.) by local authorities compared to resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP). It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes according to the type of expenditure incurred. Income and Expenditure accounted for under GAAP is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2024/25				2025/26		
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £'000	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis £'000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income & Exp Statement £'000		Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £'000	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis £'000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income & Exp Statement £'000
46,713	(9,456)	37,257	Provision of Fire Services	50,909	(11,506)	39,403
(48,549)	10,308	(38,241)	Other Income & Expenditure	(51,788)	11,699	(40,089)
(1,836)	**852**	**(984)**	**Deficit or (Surplus) on Provision of Services**	**(879)**	**193**	**(686)**

2024/25				2025/26		
General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Total General Fund £'000		General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Total General Fund £'000
(1,575)	(7,519)	(9,094)	Brought Forward	(1,871)	(9,011)	(10,882)
(1,836)		(1,836)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	(879)	0	(879)
	48	48	Transfer between General Fund Balance and Capital Grants Unapplied	0	0	0
1,540	(1,540)	0	Transfer between General Fund Balance and Earmarked General Fund Reserves	759	(783)	(24)
(1,871)	**(9,011)**	**(10,882)**	**Closing General Fund Balance**	**(1,989)**	**(9,794)**	**(11,783)**

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with GAAP, rather than the amount to be funded from contributions. The Authority's expenditure is funded by contributions from the six Local Authorities in North Wales in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The contribution position is shown in both the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the Movement in Reserves Statement.

2024/25					2025/26		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Note	Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
39,032	(1,775)	37,257	Provision of Fire Services		40,960	(1,557)	39,403
39,032	**(1,775)**	**37,257**	**Cost of Services**		**40,960**	**(1,557)**	**39,403**
56	0	56	Other Operating Expenditure		2	0	2
11,352	(182)	11,170	Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	**9**	12,125	(224)	11,901
0	(49,467)	(49,467)	Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	**10**	0	(51,992)	(51,992)
		(984)	**(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services**				**(686)**
0	(2,003)	(2,003)	(Surplus) or Deficit on Revaluation of Property, Plant & Equipment Assets	**18**	0	(318)	(318)
		(26,136)	Remeasurement of the Net Defined Benefit Liability	**18**			22,564
		(28,139)	**Other Comprehensive (Income) & Expenditure**				**22,246**
		(29,123)	**Total Comprehensive (Income) & Expenditure**				**21,560**

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce contributions from the Constituent Authorities) and other reserves. The Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Authority's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance which is funded by contributions from the six Constituent Authorities. The Net Increase / Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves line shows the statutory General Fund Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Authority.

The movements in 'Unusable Reserves' in local government accounting are notional, primarily reflecting changes in asset valuation (like buildings or pension liabilities). These are figures on paper, rather than 'cash backed', and cannot be spent on services.

2025/26	Note	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked and Grant Reserves £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Earmarked Capital Receipts £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2025		**(1,871)**	**(8,938)**	**0**	**(73)**	**(10,882)**	**176,422**	**165,540**
Movement in Reserves during 2025/26								
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services		(686)	0	0	0	(686)	0	(686)
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		0	0	0	0	0	22,246	22,246
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		**(686)**	**0**	**0**		**(686)**	**22,246**	**21,560**
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	**7**	(219)	0	0	0	(219)	219	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		**(905)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(905)**	**22,465**	**21,560**
Other Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	**8**	783	(759)	0	(24)	0	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2025/26		**(121)**	**(759)**	**0**	**(24)**	**(905)**	**22,465**	**21,560**
Balance as at 31 March 2026		**(1,989)**	**(9,697)**	**0**	**(97)**	**(11,783)**	**198,887**	**187,100**

2024/25	Note	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked and Grant Reserves £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Earmarked Capital Receipts £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2024		**(1,575)**	**(7,398)**	**(48)**	**(73)**	**(9,094)**	**203,757**	**194,663**
Movement in Reserves during 2024/25								
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services		(984)	0	0	0	(984)	0	(984)
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		0	0	0	0	0	(28,139)	(28,139)
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure		**(984)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(984)**	**(28,139)**	**(29,123)**
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	**7**	(804)	0	0	0	(804)	804	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		**(1,788)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(1,788)**	**(27,335)**	**(29,123)**
Other Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	**8**	1,492	(1,540)	48	0	0	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2024/25		**(296)**	**(1,540)**	**48**	**0**	**(1,788)**	**(27,335)**	**(29,123)**
Balance as at 31 March 2025		**(1,871)**	**(8,938)**	**0**	**(73)**	**(10,882)**	**176,422**	**165,540**

BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Authority. The net assets of the Authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the Authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves is those that the Authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

31 March 2025 £'000		Note	31 March 2026 £'000
63,041	Property, Plant & Equipment	**11**	65,589
99	Intangible Assets	**11**	197
103	Long Term Debtors	**14**	113
63,243	**Long Term Assets**		**65,899**
663	Inventories	**13**	813
2,439	Short Term Debtors	**14**	1,896
2,523	Cash & Cash Equivalents	**15**	2,624
5,625	**Current Assets**		**5,333**
(10,791)	Short Term Borrowing	**12**	(4,203)
(375)	Short Term Provisions	**17**	(322)
(6,045)	Short Term Creditors	**16**	(8,799)
(173)	Short Term Lease Liabilities	**29**	(209)
(17,384)	**Current Liabilities**		**(13,533)**
(208,143)	Pension Liability	**18**	(232,624)
0	Long Term Provisions	**17**	0
(425)	Long Term Lease Liabilities	**29**	(505)
(8,456)	Long Term Borrowing	**12**	(11,674)
(217,024)	**Long Term Liabilities**		**(244,803)**
(165,540)	**Net Assets**		**(187,104)**
(10,882)	Usable Reserves	**8**	(11,783)
176,422	Unusable Reserves	**18**	198,887
165,540	**Total Reserves**		**187,104**

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Authority are funded by way of contributions and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Authority's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Authority.

2024/25 £'000		Note	2025/26 £'000
(984)	**Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services**		**(686)**
(4,615)	Adjustments to Net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services for Non-Cash Movements	**19**	(7,622)
(437)	Adjustments for Items Included in the net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services that are Investing and Financing Activities	**19**	(429)
(6,036)	Net Cash Flows From Operating Activities	**19**	(8,737)
7,508	Investing Activities	**20**	5,214
(1,022)	Financing Activities	**21**	3,422
450	Net (Increase) or Decrease in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(101)
(2,973)	**Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period**		**(2,523)**
(2,523)	**Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Reporting Period**	**15**	**(2,624)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The notes present information about the basis of preparation of the financial statements and the specific accounting policies used. They provide information not presented elsewhere in the financial statements and are relevant to an understanding of the accounts.

1 ACCOUNTING STANDARDS THAT HAVE BEEN ISSUED BUT NOT YET ADOPTED

Where a new Standard has been published but has not yet been adopted by the Code, the Authority is required to disclose information relating to the impact of the accounting change. The changes that are introduced by the 2026/27 Code where disclosures are required in the 2025/26 financial statements are:

a) **Amendments to FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Amendments to Heritage assets)** issued in March 2024
b) **Amendments to the Classification and Measurement of Financial Instruments (Amendments to IFRS 9 and IFRS 7)** issued in May 2024
c) **Annual improvements to IFRS accounting standards – Volume 11** issued in July 2024
d) **Contracts Referencing Nature-dependent Electricity (Amendments to IFRS 9 and IFRS 7)** issued in December 2024

The Authority does not expect the adoption of items a) to d) to result in material changes to the recognition or measurement of amounts reported in the financial statements, and it is anticipated that the application of these amendments will be limited.

2 CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting policies are the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

In applying the accounting policies set out in Appendix 1, the Authority has been required to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgement in the Statement of Accounts is as follows:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government as a whole. However the Authority has determined that this uncertainty is not sufficient to indicate that the assets of the Authority might be impaired as a result of the need to reduce levels of service provision.

3 ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND OTHER MAJOR SOURCES OF ESTIMATION AND UNCERTAINTY

The statement of accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the authority about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The main items in the Authority's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2026, for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Property, Plant and Equipment - The Authority revalues its assets every 5 years supported by indexation in the intervening years. Indexation is a tool to apply an approximation of market changes, and the choice of index is a matter of judgement made in the context of providing a reasonable estimate of the movement in the value of an asset from the prior year. It is possible that property values could continue to fluctuate, especially during times of economic uncertainty, with a risk of divergence in indexed values compared to the professional valuations produced by market evidence at the quinquennial revaluation.

Valuations are based on assumptions about asset conditions, useful lives, residual values, and market conditions. These judgements are underpinned by the best available information and made by qualified valuers.

The last full revaluation was completed on 31 March 2023, and a further review of all fire station buildings was completed via a desktop revaluation exercise as at 31 March 2024. Indexation has been applied to the carrying value in 2025/26 using indices that best reflect the underlying cost drivers of each asset class.

Further information is provided in the Accounting Polices and in the Property, Plant and Equipment note.

Pension Liability - Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and, for the Local Government Pension Scheme, the expected return on pension fund assets.

Given the sensitivity of the pension liability to changes in key actuarial assumptions, there is a significant risk that reasonably possible changes in assumptions could lead to a material adjustment to the net pension liability in future financial years.

Consulting actuaries are engaged to provide the Authority with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. Further information is provided within the Pension Fund Account.

4 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

The pre-audit Statement of Accounts was certified for publication by the Section 151 Officer on 28 May 2026. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes.

Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing as at 31 March 2026, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

There have been no material events after the balance sheet date.

5 NOTE TO THE EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

2025/26	Adjustment for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Charge for Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Provision of Fire Services	(2,075)	(9,555)	124	(11,506)
Net Cost of Service	**(2,075)**	**(9,555)**	**124**	**(11,506)**
Other Income & Expenditure Other Income & Expenditure from the expenditure and funding analysis	(202)	11,472	429	11,699
Differences between the General Fund surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus on the provision of services	**(2,277)**	**1,917**	**553**	**193**

2024/25	Adjustment for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Charge for Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Provision of Fire Services	(1,590)	(8,064)	198	(9,456)
Net Cost of Service	**(1,590)**	**(8,064)**	**198**	**(9,456)**
Other Income & Expenditure Other Income & Expenditure from the expenditure and funding analysis	(862)	10,733	437	10,308
Differences between the General Fund surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus on the provision of services	**(2,452)**	**2,669**	**635**	**852**

Adjustments for capital purposes – this column adds in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in the services line, and for:

- Other operating expenditure – adjusts for capital disposals with a transfer of income on disposal of assets and the amounts written off for those assets.
- Financing and investment income and expenditure – the statutory charges for capital financing i.e. minimum revenue provision and other revenue contributions are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices.
- Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure – capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices. Revenue grants are adjusted from those receivable in the year to those receivable without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied throughout the year. The taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied in the year.

Net change for the pensions adjustments - Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS 19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income:

- For services this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs.
- For financing and investment income and expenditure – the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the CIES.

Other Adjustments - Other adjustments between amounts debited/credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute:

- For financing and investment income and expenditure the other statutory adjustments column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the timing differences for premiums and discounts.
- The charge under Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations that was projected to be received at the start of the year and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future Surpluses or Deficits on the General Fund.

6 EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ANALYSED BY NATURE

2024/25 £000		2025/26 £000
	Expenditure	
25,889	Employees	27,216
10,312	Other Operating Costs	10,260
385	Support Services	429
56	(Gain)/loss on the disposal of assets	2
11,352	Financing and Investment Expenditure	12,125
2,445	Capital Financing Costs	3,055
50,439	**Total Expenditure**	**53,087**
	Income	
(793)	Fees, Charges & Other Service Income	(895)
(182)	Interest and Investment Income	(224)
(48,549)	Levies from Constituent Authorities	(51,788)
(1,899)	Government Grants and Contributions	(866)
(51,423)	**Total Income**	**(53,773)**
(984)	**(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services**	**(686)**

7 ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER STATUTE

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the authority in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to arrive at the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the authority to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General Fund balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of an authority are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the authority are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund balance therefore summarises the resources that the authority is statutorily empowered to spend on its services or on capital investment (or the deficit of resources that the authority is required to recover) at the end of the financial year.

Capital receipts reserve

The capital receipts reserve holds the proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets, which are restricted by statute from being used other than to fund new capital expenditure or to be set aside to finance historical capital expenditure. The balance on the reserve shows the resources that have yet to be applied for these purposes at the year-end.

Capital grants unapplied

The capital grants unapplied account (reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the authority has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure against which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place.

2024/25						2025/26				
General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Capital Receipts Reserves £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Total Unusable Reserves £'000	**Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations**	General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Capital Receipts Reserves £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Total Unusable Reserves £'000
(2,602)	0	0	(2,602)	2,602	Depreciation and impairment	(2,967)	0	0	(2,967)	2,967
156	0	0	156	(156)	Revaluation losses/Gains on Property	(89)	0	0	(89)	89
(56)	0	0	(56)	56	Disposal of non-current assets	(2)	0	(24)	(26)	26
1,459	0	0	1,459	(1,459)	Capital expenditure financed from earmarked reserve/CERA	2,338	0	0	2,338	(2,338)
918	0	0	918	(918)	Capital expenditure funded from grants	204	0	0	204	(204)
1,957	0	0	1,957	(1,957)	Financing Capital (MRP)	2,138	0	0	2,138	(2,138)
1,832	**0**	**0**	**1,832**	**(1,832)**		**1,622**	**0**	**(24)**	**1,598**	**(1,598)**
11,028	0	0	11,028	(11,028)	Employers Pension contributions and payments to pensioners	12,123	0	0	12,123	(12,123)
(13,697)	0	0	(13,697)	13,697	Reversal of retirement benefits in the CIES	(14,040)	0	0	(14,040)	14,040
(2,669)	**0**	**0**	**(2,669)**	**2,669**		**(1,917)**	**0**	**0**	**(1,917)**	**1,917**
0	48	0	48	(48)	Adjustment to Grants Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
(15)	0	0	(15)	15	Movement in Accumulated Absence accrual	100	0	0	100	(100)
(852)	**48**	**0**	**(804)**	**804**	**Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulation**	**(195)**	**0**	**(24)**	**(219)**	**219**

8 USABLE RESERVES

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2025/26.

Reserve	Purpose of the Reserve	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000	Transfers (in) / out £'000	Balance 31 March 2025 £'000	Transfers (in) / out £'000	Balance 31 March 2026 £'000
Service Reserves						
Pension Reserve	Additional pension costs relating to changes to pension rules	(545)	(525)	(1,070)	(548)	(1,618)
Interest Reserve	Mitigate interest rate increases impacting the revenue budget	(300)	0	(300)	0	(300)
Fire Hydrant Repairs	Funding of the backlog of hydrant repairs	(90)	0	(90)	0	(90)
PPE Uniform / Stock	Increased uniform costs due to changes in legislation	(697)	(71)	(768)	0	(768)
Transformational Change	Funding for the delivery of transformational change projects	(851)	0	(851)	0	(851)
Facilities Improvements	Ensure buildings meet required standard and improve energy efficiency	(651)	(329)	(980)	0	(980)
Legal Liability	Funding of future legal liabilities for known/expected claims	(310)	0	(310)	30	(280)
Training	Implement changes to training provision as required by legislation	(250)	0	(250)	0	(250)
Major Incidents	Offset costs of major incidents in excess of budget	(150)	0	(150)	0	(150)
System Improvements	A fund set aside to meet the cost of system improvements	(711)	0	(711)	0	(711)
Inflation	Offset costs of inflation in excess of budget	(250)	0	(250)	(151)	(401)
Pay Structure review	For on-going discussions regarding the pay structure for firefighters	(473)	0	(473)	0	(473)
Capital & Grants Reserves						
Capital Projects	A fund set aside for delayed schemes and retention costs	(914)	(89)	(1,003)	(90)	(1,093)
Radio Scheme	Emergency Service Network upgrade	(1,011)	(526)	(1,537)	0	(1,537)
Grant Reduction	Offset reduction in Fire Safety funding from Welsh Government	(195)	0	(195)	0	(195)
Total Earmarked Reserves		**(7,398)**	**(1,540)**	**(8,938)**	**(759)**	**(9,697)**
General Fund	Available for general purposes and to provide operational resilience	(1,575)	(296)	(1,871)	(121)	(1,989)
Capital Receipts	Retains receipts from asset sales for future capital expenditure	(73)	0	(73)	(24)	(97)
Capital Grants Unapplied	Holds capital grants and contributions not yet applied to expenditure	(48)	48	0	0	0
Total Usable Reserves		**(9,094)**	**(1,788)**	**(10,882)**	**(904)**	**(11,783)**

9 FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
619	Interest payable and similar charges	653
(182)	Interest receivable and similar income	(224)
10,733	Net Interest on the net defined benefit liability	11,472
11,170	**Total**	**11,901**

10 TAXATION AND NON SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
4,871	Anglesey Council	5,186
8,063	Conwy County Borough Council	8,562
6,812	Denbighshire County Council	7,271
10,957	Flintshire County Council	11,661
8,295	Gwynedd Council	8,919
9,551	Wrexham County Borough Council	10,189
48,549	**Levies from Constituent Authorities**	**51,788**
918	Capital Grants and Contributions	204
49,467	**Total Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income**	**51,992**

11 PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Movements on Balances

2025-2026	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property Plant & Equipment Total £'000	Intangible Assets Total £'000	Assets Held for Sale Total £'000
Gross Book Value at 1 April 2025	**52,890**	**26,623**	**766**	**80,279**	**233**	**0**
Re-categorisation of assets	181	533	(714)	**0**	0	0
Additions	848	2,747	1,681	**5,276**	135	0
Non-Enhancing Expenditure	(850)	0	0	**(850)**	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,079	0	0	**1,079**	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	0	(2,217)	0	**(2,217)**	0	0
Derecognition - Other	(2)	0	0	**(2)**	0	0
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2026	**54,146**	**27,686**	**1,733**	**83,565**	**368**	**0**
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment						
At 1 April 2024	(1,027)	(16,211)	0	**(17,238)**	(134)	0
Depreciation/Amortisation charge	(1,140)	(1,790)	0	**(2,930)**	(37)	0
Depreciation written out of the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Depreciation written out to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Depreciation written out to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	0	2,192	0	**2,192**	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	**0**	0	0
Accumulated Depreciation at 31 March 2026	**(2,167)**	**(15,809)**	**0**	**(17,976)**	**(171)**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2026	**51,979**	**11,877**	**1,733**	**65,589**	**197**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	51,863	10,412	766	**63,041**	99	0

2024-2025	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles and Equipment £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property Plant & Equipment Total £'000	Intangible Assets Total £'000	Assets Held for Sale Total £'000
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2024	**46,253**	**24,129**	**1,060**	**71,442**	**233**	**0**
Recognition of Right of Use Assets	593	328	0	921	0	
Gross Book Value at 1 April 2024	**46,846**	**24,457**	**1,060**	**72,363**	**233**	**0**
Re-categorisation of assets	483	577	(1,060)	0	0	0
Additions	3,402	2,366	766	6,534	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	2,003	0	0	2,003	0	0
Revaluation increase / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	156	0	0	156	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	0	(777)	0	(777)	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Book Value at 31 March 2025	**52,890**	**26,623**	**766**	**80,279**	**233**	**0**
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment						
At 1 April 2024	(43)	(15,355)	0	(15,398)	(92)	0
Depreciation/Amortisation charge	(984)	(1,577)	0	(2,561)	(42)	0
Depreciation written out of the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation written out to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0	0	0	
Derecognition - Disposals	0	721	0	721	0	0
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accumulated Depreciation at 31 March 2024	**(1,027)**	**(16,211)**	**0**	**(17,238)**	**(134)**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	**51,863**	**10,412**	**766**	**63,041**	**99**	**0**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2024	46,210	8,774	1,060	56,044	141	0

Depreciation

Buildings are depreciated using componentisation, where an estimate is made of the useful life of each component of the building and a weighted average then used to calculate the annual charge.

Other assets are recognised at historic cost, which is a proxy for current cost on short life assets, and depreciated over their useful lives.

Revaluations and Impairments

The authority ensures that all property, plant and equipment to be measured at current value through a quinquennial revaluation process, supplemented by annual indexation in intervening years.

All valuations were carried out internally. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

The following indices were used for 2025/26 indexation:

Index	Average change %	Valuation Change £'000
BCIS All-In TPI	2.49	1,043
MSCI Capital Growth - Industrial and CoStar	3.00	36
MSCI Capital Growth - Offices and CoStar	0.10	-
Total		**1,079**

Valuations of vehicles, plant and equipment were based on current prices where there was an active second-hand market or latest list prices adjusted for the condition of the asset.

Capital Commitments

The Authority is committed to capital expenditure in future periods arising from contracts entered into at the Balance Sheet date. Capital expenditure committed at 31 March 2026 for future periods equates to £3,202k (2024/25: £1,813k). The commitments relate to the following:

Description	£'000
Building Works	2,012
Vehicles	764
Equipment	426
Total	**3,202**

Surplus Assets (Non operational property, plant and equipment)

The Authority does not have any material surplus assets.

12 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Categories of Financial Instruments

The following categories of financial instruments are carried in the Balance Sheet:

	Non Current		Current	
	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2026 £'000	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2026 £'000
Financial Assets at Amortised Cost:				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0	0	2,523	2,624
Debtors	103	113	2,439	1,896
Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost:				
Interest Accrued	0	0	(174)	(121)
Borrowings	(8,456)	(11,674)	(10,617)	(4,082)
Total Borrowing	**(8,456)**	**(11,674)**	**(10,791)**	**(4,203)**
Creditors	0	0	(6,045)	(8,799)
Lease Liability	(425)	(505)	(173)	(209)

Financial Instruments Gains/Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

	2024/25		2025/26	
	Financial Liabilities Measured at amortised cost £'000	Financial Assets Loans and receivables £'000	Financial Liabilities Measured at amortised cost £'000	Financial Assets Loans and receivables £'000
Interest expense in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	619	0	653	0
Interest income in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	(182)	0	(224)
Net gain/(loss) for the year	**619**	**(182)**	**653**	**(224)**

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities carried at Amortised Cost

Financial liabilities and financial assets represented by loans and receivables are carried on the Balance Sheet at amortised cost (in long term assets/liabilities with accrued interest in current assets/liabilities). Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments, using the following assumptions:

- For loans from the PWLB and other loans payable, borrowing from the PWLB has been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark market rates have been used to provide the fair value;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount or the billed amount;
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

	31-Mar-25		31-Mar-26	
	Carrying amount £'000	Fair value £'000	Carrying amount £'000	Fair value £'000
PWLB debt	(14,073)	(13,300)	(13,756)	(13,040)
Non-PWLB debt	(5,000)	(5,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Total Debt	**(19,073)**	**(18,300)**	**(15,756)**	**(15,040)**

The fair value has been calculated with direct reference to published price quotations in an active market. In the case of the Fire and Rescue Authority they are based on premiums that would be payable if PWLB loans were surrendered and provides an estimate of the additional interest payable compared to the same loan at current market rates discounted back to the current period.

13 INVENTORIES

	Main Stores		Fleet Stock	
	2024/25 £’000	2025/26 £’000	2024/25 £’000	2025/26 £’000
Balance at start of year	413	437	201	225
Purchases	952	470	203	330
Write offs/adjustments	(3)	(5)	(1)	(2)
Recognised as an Expense	(925)	(310)	(178)	(332)
Balance outstanding at year end	**437**	**592**	**225**	**221**

14 DEBTORS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Long Term	
103	Prepayments	113
103	**Total Long Term**	**113**
	Short Term	
445	Other Receivable Amounts	464
1,509	Trade Receivables	660
485	Prepayments	772
2,439	**Total Short Term**	**1,896**
2,542	**Total Long and Short Term Debtors**	**2,009**

15 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
2,517	Cash and Bank Balances	2,620
0	Short Term Deposits	0
6	Petty Cash Imprests	4
2,523	**Total**	**2,624**

16 CREDITORS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(820)	Other Payables	(3,783)
(5,225)	Trade Payables	(5,016)
(6,045)	**Total**	**(8,799)**

17 PROVISIONS

At 31 March 2026 the Authority held a provision with a value of £322k relating to employee liabilities. This provision will be utilised to offset revenue expenditure, when it occurs.

	Opening Balance £’000	Movements In £’000	Movements Out £’000	Closing balance £’000
Short Term Provisions	(375)	(1)	54	(322)
Long Term Provisions	0	0	0	0
Total	**(375)**	**(1)**	**54**	**(322)**

18 UNUSABLE RESERVES

31-Mar-25 £'000		31-Mar-26 £'000
(19,012)	Revaluation Reserve	(18,971)
(13,111)	Capital Adjustment Account	(15,069)
208,143	Pensions Reserve	232,624
402	Accumulated Absences Account	303
176,422	**Total**	**198,887**

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment.

The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost;
- used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation or disposed of and the gains are realised.

The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(17,304)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(19,012)**
(2,003)	Upward revaluation of assets	(1,079)
0	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	761
0	Adjustment from Capital Adjustment Account	0
295	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	359
(19,012)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(18,971)**

Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions.

The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement. The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Authority.

The Account also contains valuation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(10,935)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(13,111)**
2,602	Charges for depreciation & impairment of non-current assets	2,967
56	Amount of non current asset written off on disposal or sale	25
(156)	Adjustment relating to the revaluation of assets	89
(295)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(359)
2,207	**Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year**	**2,722**
(918)	Capital grants & contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(204)
(1,459)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund/ Earmarked reserves	(2,338)
(49)	Application of grants to capital financing from the capital grants unapplied account	0
(1,957)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	(2,138)
(4,383)	**Capital Financing Applied in year**	**(4,680)**
(13,111)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(15,069)**

Pensions Reserve

The pensions reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The authority accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the pensions reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
231,610	**Balance at 1 April**	**208,143**
(26,136)	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability	22,564
13,697	Reversal of Items related to retirement benefits debited to the Provision of Service in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	14,040
(11,028)	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(12,123)
(23,467)	**Movement on Pension Reserve**	**24,481**
208,143	**Balance at 31 March**	**232,624**

Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance from accruing for compensated absence earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
386	**Balance at 1 April**	**402**
(386)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(402)
402	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	303
402	**Balance at 31 March**	**303**

19 CASH FLOW STATEMENT - OPERATING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(984)	**Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services**	**(686)**
	Adjustment to net (surplus)/deficit for non-cash	
49	Increase/(Decrease) in Inventories	150
1,205	Increase/(Decrease) in Debtors	(533)
(428)	(Increase)/Decrease in Creditors	(2,754)
0	(Increase)/Decrease in Lease Liabilities	(81)
(2,602)	Depreciation Charge	(2,967)
0	Contributions Received/Capital Receipts	24
(2,608)	IAS 19 Pension Adjustments	(1,295)
0	Impairment Charge/Revaluation of Assets	(89)
(56)	Carrying amount of Non Current Assets sold or derecognised	(25)
(159)	Contribution (to)/from various Provisions	53
0	Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(204)
(16)	Accumulated Absences Reserve	99
(4,615)	**Sub Total**	**(7,622)**
	Adjustments for Items Included in the net (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services that are Investing and Financing Activities	
(619)	Interest paid	(653)
182	Interest Received	224
(437)	**Sub Total**	**(429)**
(6,036)	**Net cash flow from operating activities**	**(8,737)**

20 CASH FLOW STATEMENT – INVESTING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
6,534	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	5,411
0	Less Right of Use Assets lease additions	(403)
56	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	2
918	Other receipts from investing activities	204
7,508	**Net cash flow from investing activities**	**5,214**

21 CASH FLOW STATEMENT – FINANCING ACTIVITIES

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
(5,000)	Cash receipts of short-term and long-term borrowing	(7,500)
3,714	Repayments of short-term and long-term borrowing	10,817
(173)	Cash payments for the reduction of outstanding lease	(324)
437	Other payments for financing activities	429
(1,022)	**Net cash flow from financing activities**	**3,422**

22 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Authority paid the following amounts to members of the Authority during the year:

2024/25 £		2025/26 £
90,515	Elected Members' Allowances	90,875
1,560	Elected Members' Expenses	1,203
1,142	Co-opted Members' costs	1,376
93,217	**Total**	**93,454**

Elected Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority are entitled to receive allowances in recognition of their roles and responsibilities. These allowances include a basic salary payable to all members, and where applicable, senior salaries for those undertaking additional duties such as Chair or Deputy Chair of the Authority or its committees.

In addition to allowances, Elected Members may claim reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties. These expenses typically include travel and subsistence costs associated with attending Authority meetings, training sessions, and other approved engagements.

Co-opted Members, who are appointed to provide independent input or specialist expertise - such as those serving on the Standards Committee - do not receive an allowance. Instead, they are eligible for payments in recognition of their participation in official meetings and related activities.

23 OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

The remuneration paid to the Authority's senior employees is detailed in the following table. Senior Officers whose salary is £150,000 or more are named.

Post Title	Year	Salary (Inc Fees & Allowances) £	Pension Contributions £	Total Remuneration £
Chief Fire Officer: Dawn Docx	**2025/26**	**162,057**	**29,656**	**191,713**
	2024/25	156,392	28,620	185,012
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (vacant from April 2025)	**2025/26**	**12,366**	**3,387**	**15,753**
	2024/25	125,114	38,785	163,899
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	**2025/26**	**122,020**	**22,330**	**144,350**
	2024/25	117,294	21,465	138,759
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (appointed March 2024)*	**2025/26**	**120,655**	**35,263**	**155,918**
	2024/25	101,921	25,901	127,822
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (appointed January 2025)**	**2025/26**	**116,535**	**33,964**	**150,499**
	2024/25	28,926	7,431	36,357
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (seconded March 2024)***	**2025/26**	**26,444**	**8,198**	**34,642**
	2024/25	47,314	13,938	61,252
Treasurer - Section 151 Officer (15 days per Year)	**2025/26**	**8,510**	**1,557**	**10,067**
	2024/25	8,340	1,526	9,866

* The fixed-term contract for the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) ended in December 2024. The postholder was re-appointed on a temporary basis in February 2025 and secured the role permanently in July 2025.

**The postholder was appointed on a temporary basis in January 2025 and was subsequently appointed on a permanent basis in July 2025.

***Assistant Chief Fire Officer temporarily seconded to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service as Chief Fire Officer, returned to NWFRS with effect from 13 November 2024 and subsequently left the organisation in June 2025. Salary costs for the secondment, totalling £107,708, and pension costs totalling £22,423, were met and reported by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Monitoring Officer is provided by Flintshire County Council as part of a Service Level Agreement so no costs for an individual are shown in the table above. Further details on the Monitoring Officer costs can be found within Note 27 – Related Parties.

The Authority's other employees receiving more than £60,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer pension contributions) were paid the following amounts:

Remuneration Band	Number of Employees	
	2024/25	2025/26
£60,000 - £64,999	22	8
£65,000 - £69,999	6	17
£70,000 - £74,999	4	4
£75,000 - £79,999	2	4
£80,000 - £84,999	0	0
£85,000 - £89,999	2	1
£90,000 - £94,999	2	1
£95,000 - £99,999	0	3

The following table gives the ratio between the Chief Fire Officer's remuneration and the median remuneration of Fire and Rescue Service staff:

2024/25		2025/26
£156,392	Chief Fire Officer	£162,057
£37,675	Median	£38,881
4.15	Ratio	4.17

The data in the table above includes total salary paid (excludes pension contributions). The staff that are employed under Retained Duty System (RDS) contracts have been included in the calculation on their Full Time Equivalent scale point rather than actual earnings.

The number of exit packages with total cost per band is set out in the table below. There were no compulsory or voluntary redundancies in either 2024/25 or 2025/26, and accordingly no redundancy costs or other compensation for loss of office were incurred.

All exit packages disclosed relate to employer-initiated terminations, arising from failed probationary periods or dismissals, with costs comprising pay in lieu of notice (PILON) only.

The 2024/25 comparative figures have been restated (previously disclosed as £0) to reflect the inclusion of all PILON costs relating to employer-initiated terminations, excluding ill-health retirements.

Exit Package Cost Band	Total Number of Exit Packages		Total Cost of Exit Packages	
	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26
£0 - £19,999	2	2	£3,100	£3,152
Total	**2**	**2**	**£3,100**	**£3,152**

24 EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

Fees payable to the Auditor General for Wales with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor:

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
60	Financial Audit Work	63
17	Performance Audit Work	18
77	**Total**	**81**

25 GRANTS

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Credited to Services	
250	Home Safety Equipment	240
304	All Wales National Resilience	112
145	Youth & Young People Engagement	141
72	Operation Ugain	80
2	Windrush Grant	0
0	Welsh Government Culture Improvement Initiatives	38
209	Fire and Rescue Service Pay Pressures	51
982	**Total**	**662**
	Credited to taxation and non-specific income & expenditure	
377	Fireground Radios	0
115	Electric Vehicles	57
131	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure	89
295	Public Sector Low Carbon Heat Grant	58
918	**Total**	**204**

26 AGENCY SERVICES

The Authority acts as an agent on behalf of Welsh Government in administering two grant schemes for all the Fire and Rescue Services in Wales. The approved grants are paid to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service who are then responsible for distributing the grants to the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Authority acts as an agent for the Local Resilience Forum. This is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. Contributions from the various public bodies, are paid to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. This funding is utilised to pay for the expenditure of the Forum. As at 31 March 2026, the Authority held funds of £2k relating to the Forum.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
3,117	All Wales National Resilience	2,827
227	Youth and Young People Engagement	240
110	Local Resilience Forum	152
3,454	**Total**	**3,219**

27 RELATED PARTIES

The Authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Authority or to be controlled or influenced by the Authority. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Authority might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the authority.

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the authority operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants (the Revenue Support Grant is paid to constituent authorities) and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the authority has with other parties. Directly received grant receipts are shown in Note 25 and constituent authority contributions are shown in Note 10.

Members

Members of the authority have direct control over the authority's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2025/26 is shown in Note 22.

All Members complete a declaration of interest with related parties return. No Members of the Authority, or their close relations, entered into any declarable related party transaction in 2024/25 or 2025/26. A list of Elected Members' interests is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is available to view on the website - www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

Senior Officers

The Senior Officers completed a declaration of interest with related parties return for the year 2025/26. Senior Officers' remuneration is shown in Note 23.

An Assistant Chief Fire Officer declared an interest as a trustee with DangerPoint. The independent charity runs an education activity centre based in North Wales. Payments of £4,800 have been made to DangerPoint in 2025/26, with £7,700 outstanding at year end (paid 08/04/26) as part of Welsh Government grant funding (2024/25: £13,300). In addition funding is provided for the cost of an administrator, which amounted to £37,514 (2024/25: £34,826).

The treasurer was also contracted as Independent Board Chair for Powys Pension Fund and Merseyside Pension Fund and as a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Adra a housing association.

No income was received by the Authority during 2025/26 (2024/25: nil).

Other Public Bodies

Flintshire County Council provide the role of Monitoring Officer. This post is held by the Chief Officer (Governance)/Monitoring Officer and payments amounted to £20k (2024/25: £20k).

Mersey Internal Audit provide internal audit services for which payments amounted to £23k. As at 31 March 2026 nothing remained outstanding.

Carmarthenshire County Council, acting on behalf of the Dyfed Pension Fund, manage the payments made to firefighter pensioners on behalf of the Authority. They are also responsible for managing the records of current pensioners and active members of the scheme. Transactions in the year amounted to £120k (2024/25: £113k). As at 31 March 2026 nothing remained outstanding.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, via a secondment agreement, provide a Firefighter's Pension Lead for which payments in year amounted to £18k (2024/25: £18k) with £4k outstanding at year end.

There are joint arrangements with North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner as well as a shared control room. The Authority's contribution towards facilities management amounted to £291k (2024/25: £234k) with £146k outstanding at year end.

28 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND CAPITAL FINANCING

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the value of assets acquired under finance leases and PFI contracts), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the capital financing requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the authority that has yet to be financed.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
27,950	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	31,022
921	Recognition of IFRS16	0
28,871	**Opening CFR adjusted for IFRS16 implementation**	**31,022**
	Capital Investment	
6,534	Property, Plant & Equipment	5,411
	Sources of Finance	
(967)	Government Grants & Contributions	(204)
(1,957)	Sums set aside from revenue (MRP)	(2,138)
(1,459)	Direct Revenue Contributions	(2,338)
31,022	**Closing Capital Financing Requirement**	**31,753**
3,072	Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	731
3,072	**Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement**	**731**

The opening Capital Financing Requirement for 2024/25 has been restated to show the recognition of leases under IFRS16. Further details relating to leases can be found in Note 29.

29 LEASES

Authority as lessee - Right of Use Assets

Leases are recognised as right of use assets with a corresponding liability at the date from which the leased asset is available for use (or the IFRS 16 transition date of 01 April 2024, if later). The leases are typically for fixed periods in excess of one year, but may have extension options.

For arrangements previously accounted for as operating leases, a right-of-use asset and a lease liability are now on the balance sheet at 1 April 2024.

As permitted by the Code, the authority excludes leases for low value items that cost less than £10,000, and leases with a term shorter than 12 months. The Authority recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense over the lease term.

The authority has acquired vehicles and equipment by entering into lease contracts with typical terms of four years. In addition the authority leases three buildings with typical lease terms of five years.

The table shows the change in the right of use assets held under leases by the Authority.

	Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles & Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 April 2025	485	173	658
Additions	0	403	403
Revaluations	(2)	12	10
Depreciation and amortisation	(110)	(100)	(210)
Disposals	0	(31)	(31)
Balance as at 31 March 2026	**373**	**457**	**830**

The authority incurred the following expenses and cash flows in relation to leases:

	Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles & Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Comprehensive income and expenditure statement			
Interest expense on lease liabilities	24	3	27
Expense relating to short term leases	0	2	2
Expense relating to exempt leases of low value	0	13	13
Variable lease payments not included in the measure of lease liabilities	161	28	189
Cash flow statement			
Minimum lease payments	117	207	324

The Authority used the lessee's incremental borrowing rate (PWLB annuity rate) specific to the term and start date of the lease used to discount leased vehicles, and the rate implicit in the lease to discount leased properties.

The lease liabilities are due to be settled over the following time bands (measured at the undiscounted amounts of expected cash payments).

31-Mar-25 £'000		31-Mar-26 £'000
173	Less than one year	209
425	One to five years	505
0	More than five years	0
598	**Total undiscounted liabilities**	**714**

30 DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES

Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its employees, the Authority makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Authority has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that the employees earn their future entitlement.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme. The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme of which the Authority is an employer member of the Clwyd Pension fund. The governance of this scheme is the responsibility of Clwyd Pension Fund, Flintshire County Council in its capacity of Scheme Manager and Administering Authority.

Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations and overseen by the Pension Committee, including the appointment of the investment managers. The principal risks to the authority of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme.

These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements for an actuarial revaluation to be undertaken at regular intervals and for employer and employee contribution rates to be set. The employer contributions are charged to the cost of services based on employee earnings in the period rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions.

The charge to the levy reflects only the actual pension payments made during the year. However, to show the full cost of retirement benefits, these are first recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and then reversed out of the General Fund through the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following entries reflect these adjustments.

Any discretionary benefits or additional costs associated with ill-health retirements are an unfunded cost and charged separately to the Authority. To the extent that such costs are known they are included within the budget setting process and the Authority maintains a reserve to address any unplanned costs and to smooth the effect of changes to the employer contribution rates.

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS) is an unfunded defined benefits scheme, meaning that no investments are held to fund the liabilities. Contributions, at a rate set by the Welsh Government, made by the employer and employees on pensionable earnings are held in a pension fund account. Benefits paid to retirees are also charged to the account with any cash deficit being received from or paid to the Welsh Government.

The information that follows has been extracted from the disclosure reports provided by Mercer (for the LGPS pension scheme) and Government Actuary's Department (GAD) (for the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FFPS)). The most relevant details affecting the Pension funds are detailed below:

Guaranteed Minimum Pension equalisation and indexation

The Government has published a consultation on indexation and equalisation of Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMP), with the proposal being to extend the "interim solution" to those members who reach State Pension Age after 5 April 2021. A past service cost was included within the 2019/20 disclosures for extending the equalisation to all future retirees.

There was also a further court ruling on 20 November 2020 regarding GMP equalisation. The court ruled that scheme trustees are required to revisit past Cash Equivalent Transfer Values (CETVs) to ensure GMP equalisation. This may result in additional top-ups where GMP equalisation means that members did not receive their full entitlement. For public service pension schemes, the expectation is that this ruling will be taken forward on a cross scheme basis and will need legal input.

This may require revisiting past CETV cases for members with State Pension age after 5 April 2016 and who took a CETV from the scheme before CETV were equalised. The scope of any costs are yet to be determined. Data on historic CETVs is not available to estimate the potential impact. It is expected that this will be a relatively small uplift for a relatively small subset of members (i.e. those who took a CETV and are in scope for a top up).

McCloud Judgment

Following the Court of Appeal, the McCloud judgment was handed down in December 2018 which concluded that the transitional protections introduced in 2015 were discriminatory on the basis of age. The UK Government subsequently announced plans to address the discrimination across the UK public sector pension schemes including the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

The past service costs have been estimated to take into account the impact of the McCloud judgment and have been included within the Pension Fund since 2018/19. These estimates have been updated to reflect the remedy outlined by the UK Government and the requisite changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations laid down by Welsh Ministers which came into force on 1 October 2023.

The Firefighters' Pensions (Remediable Service) (Wales) Regulations 2023 were laid and came into force on 1 October 2023 to make provision for Scheme Managers to implement the changes necessary to effect remedy and these are required to be completed within an 18-month period. Due to the complexity and volume of calculations, the Service did not fully meet the deadline of 31 March 2025.

Due to the inability to meet the statutory requirements of Section 29 of the PSPJOA 2022, the matter was reported to The Pensions Regulator (TPR).

During 2025/26 the Service continued to implement these changes and this exercise has been materially concluded for members assessed to be at detriment. The estimated financial impact was included within the 2020 revaluation and work continues to fully address all residual cases.

Matthews / O'Brien

Following a lengthy legal process, the judgment in the case of O'Brien vs Ministry of Justice was issued during 2019. This found that the decision to limit the period from which a part-time employee could join the pension scheme was erroneous and eligible employees should be permitted to join the relevant scheme with effect from the start of their contracts.

This judgment has national implications for staff who are employed as retained firefighters whose contract of employment commenced before 1 July 2000 or those who have not yet received the full opportunity to purchase past service to which they were entitled.

The Welsh Ministers have made amendments to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2007 (Modified) to provide a mechanism for this matter to be addressed. The Firefighters' Pension Schemes and Compensation Scheme (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2024, was made and laid in January and came into force on 1 February 2024. All eligible persons will be afforded the opportunity of buying back pension entitlements within the timescales specified within the order.

The full financial impact of the updated regulations cannot be fully calculated although an estimate has been included within the 2020 valuation of the Authority's pension scheme liabilities undertaken by the Government's Actuary Department (GAD).

The tables below provide additional details regarding the pension schemes:

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPS 2024/25 £'000	General Fund Transfers	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
		Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		
		Cost of Services		
1,033	1,870	Current Service Cost	704	1,010
0	0	Past Service Costs	0	0
51	0	Administration Expenses	54	0
		Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure		
(16)	10,810	Net Interest Expense	(18)	11,490
0	0	Transfers out of scheme	0	0
0	(10)	Transfers in to scheme	0	800
0	0	Curtailments	0	0
1,068	**12,670**	**Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to Provision of Services**	**740**	**13,300**
		Other Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		
		Remeasurement of the net defined benefit/liability comprising:		
1,894	0	Return on Plan Assets (excluding Interest)	706	0
(51)	(530)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses arising on Changes in Demographic Assumptions	325	0
(6,176)	(25,240)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses arising on Changes in Financial Assumptions	(4)	(7,320)
0	(60)	Actuarial (Gains)/Losses - experience	0	29,930
(4,333)	**(25,830)**	**Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement**	**1,027**	**22,610**
		Movement in Reserves Statement		
(1,068)	(12,670)	Reversal of net charges made to the surplus or deficit on the Provision of Services for Post Employment Benefits in accordance with the Code	(740)	(13,300)
		Actual amounts charged to the General Fund for pensions in the year		
0	10,370	Retirement Benefits payable to Pensioners	0	11,430
658	0	Employer Contributions Payable to the scheme	693	0

The amount included on the Balance Sheet arising from the Authority's obligation, in respect of its defined benefit plans are as follows:

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
(35,728)	(208,100)	Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(37,140)	(232,580)
40,950		Fair Value of plan assets	41,599	
5,222	**(208,100)**	**Sub Total**	**4,459**	**(232,580)**
(5,265)		Effect of IAS19 / IFRIC 14	(4,503)	
(43)	**(208,100)**	**Net surplus / (liability) arising from defined benefit obligation**	**(44)**	**(232,580)**

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Movement in the Value of Scheme Assets	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
41,630	0	Opening Fair Value of Scheme Assets	40,950	0
2,021	0	Interest Income	2,387	0
		Remeasurement Gain/Loss		
(1,894)	0	The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	(706)	0
658	12,440	Contributions from employer	693	13,740
437	0	Contributions from employees into the scheme	462	0
(1,851)	(12,440)	Benefits/transfer paid	(2,133)	(13,740)
(51)	0	Administration Expenses	(54)	0
40,950	**0**	**Closing value of scheme assets**	**41,599**	**0**

LGPS 2024/25 £'000	FFPF 2024/25 £'000	Movement in the Fair Value of Scheme Liabilities	LGPS 2025/26 £'000	FFPS 2025/26 £'000
(40,392)	(231,610)	Opening Balance as at 1 April	(35,728)	(208,100)
(1,033)	(1,870)	Current Service Cost	(704)	(1,010)
0	(10)	Transfers In	0	(800)
(1,944)	(10,810)	Interest Costs	(2,058)	(11,490)
(437)	(2,070)	Contributions from scheme participants	(462)	(2,310)
		Remeasurement Gains and losses		
51	60	Actuarial Gains/losses - experience	(506)	(29,930)
6,176	530	Actuarial Gains/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	181	0
1,851	25,240	Actuarial Gains/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	4	7,320
0	12,440	Benefits/ transfers paid	2,133	13,740
0	0	Curtailments	0	0
0	0	Past Service Cost	0	0
(35,728)	**(208,100)**	**Balance at 31 March**	**(37,140)**	**(232,580)**

Local Government Pension Scheme: Assets Comprised Of:

Quoted 2024/25 £'000	Fair Value of Scheme Assets	Quoted 2025/26 £'000
	Cash & Cash Equivalents	
0	Cash Accounts	3,786
0	Temporary Investments	0
0	**Subtotal Cash and Cash Equivalents**	**3,786**
	Equity Securities	
6,296	Global Quoted	6,697
0	Emerging Markets	0
6,296	**Subtotal Equities**	**6,697**
	Bonds	
5,409	Overseas Other	6,656
9,685	Liability-Driven Investment	11,981
15,094	**Subtotal Bonds**	**18,637**
	Property	
1,550	UK	1,331
209	Overseas	0
1,759	**Subtotal Property**	**1,331**
	Alternatives	
6,298	Hedge Funds	0
3,239	Private Equity	6,573
123	Infrastructure	3,328
4,808	Timber and Agriculture	83
1,380	Diversified Growth Fund	0
1,953	Private Credit	1,165
17,801	**Subtotal Alternatives**	**11,149**
40,950	**Totals Assets**	**41,600**

Scheme assets are valued using fair values techniques based on the characteristics of each instrument, where possible using market-based information.

Further information can be found within the Clwyd Pension Fund's Annual Report, publicised on their website - mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk/home/investments-and-governance/annual-reports/

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been valued on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method which assesses the future liabilities of the fund discounted to their present value.

The Firefighters’ Scheme has been valued by the Government Actuary's Department.

The LGPS liabilities have been valued by Mercer, an independent firm of actuaries and are based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 1 April 2023.

2024/25	LGPS	2025/26
	Mortality Assumptions	
	Longevity at retirement for current pensioners:	
21.1	Men	21.0
23.6	Women	23.6
	Longevity at retirement for future pensioners	
22.4	Men	22.1
25.4	Women	25.2
	Other Assumptions	
2.6%	Rate of Inflation	2.9%
3.9%	Rate of Increase in Salaries	4.2%
2.7%	Rate of Increase in Pensions	3.0%
5.9%	Rate of Discounting Scheme Liabilities	6.2%
2.6%	CARE Revaluation Rate	2.9%

2024/25	Firefighters Pension Scheme	2025/26
	Mortality Assumptions	
	Longevity at retirement for current pensioners:	
21.3	Men	21.3
21.3	Women	21.3
	Longevity at retirement for future pensioners	
22.7	Men	22.8
22.7	Women	22.8
	Other Assumptions	
2.7%	Rate of Inflation	3.0%
3.5%	Rate of Increase in Salaries	3.7%
2.7%	Rate of Increase in Pensions	3.0%
5.7%	Rate of Discounting Scheme Liabilities	6.1%
3.5%	CARE Revaluation Rate	3.7%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the above tables.

The sensitivity analyses below are based on reasonably possible changes to assumptions at the reporting period end, with each assumption varied independently. For example, longevity assumes changes in life expectancy for men and women. While such isolated changes are unlikely in practice, and some assumptions may be interrelated, the estimates follow the scheme’s accounting policies—using the projected unit credit method on an actuarial basis. The methods and assumptions used are consistent with those applied in the previous period.

Impact of Assumptions on the obligation - LGPS

	As Reported	+0.5% p.a. discount	+0.25% p.a. inflation	+0.25% p.a. pay growth	1 year increase in life expectancy	+/-1% change in 2023/24 investment returns	
						+1%	-1%
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Liabilities	37,140	34,597	38,481	37,348	37,898	37,140	37,140
Assets	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(41,599)	(42,010)	(41,188)
Deficit (surplus)	(4,459)	(7,002)	(3,118)	(4,251)	(3,701)	(4,870)	(4,048)
Projected Service Cost for next year	699	589	759	699	718	699	699
Projected Net Interest Cost for next year	(307)	(502)	(223)	(293)	(259)	(332)	(281)

	As Reported	Discount rate on liabilities 0.5% increase	Increase in salaries 0.5% increase	Life expectancy 1 year increase	Increase in pensions 0.5% increaase
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Impact	-6.50%	1%	2.50%	6.50%
Firefighters Pension Scheme	(232,580)	(217,462)	(234,906)	(238,395)	(247,698)

Impact on the Authority's Cashflow

The cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services is recognised when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required to be made against the levy is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/ retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.

31 NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Authority has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which ensures the Authority has measures in place to manage financial risks. The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 was formally approved at a meeting on 28 April 2025. The Strategy sets out the Prudential Indicators (PI's) for the year. During the year, quarterly reports detail the progress against the strategy and if necessary a revision of the PI's.

At year end, a final report sets out how the Authority has performed during the year. How the Authority manages risks arising from financial instruments is detailed in the treasury reports presented to the Audit Committee and can be accessed from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service website - www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

The Authority's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including:

Credit Risk

This is the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Authority.

The highest credit risk is for investments and these are managed through the Treasury Management Strategy, which sets out the parameters for the management of risks associated with Financial Instruments and emphasises that priority is to be given to security and liquidity, rather than yield. The Authority's policy on treasury investments is to place short term cash surpluses into bank call accounts until required. The Authority does not have long term investments. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, with selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss.

Liquidity Risk

This is the possibility that the Authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments.

The Authority monitors its cash balance to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the Authority has ready access to borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board and so there is no perceived risk that the Authority will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead, the risk is that the Authority will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The Authority will always have a borrowing requirement as it does not hold significant cash or reserves and only has limited access to capital grant funding. The maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing is as follows:

2025-26	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31 March 2026 £000	31 March 2026 %
Less than 1 year	60%	0%	2,000	13%
Between 1 and 2 years	45%	0%	1,700	11%
Between 2 and 5 years	45%	0%	1,800	11%
Between 5 and 10 years	75%	0%	2,000	13%
More than 10 years	100%	0%	8,260	52%
Total			**15,760**	**100%**

2024-25	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2025 %
Less than 1 year	60%	0%	9,300	49%
Between 1 and 2 years	45%	0%	1,500	8%
Between 2 and 5 years	45%	0%	1,200	6%
Between 5 and 10 years	75%	0%	0	0%
More than 10 years	100%	0%	7,070	37%
Total			**19,070**	**100%**

Market Risk

This is the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements.

As at 31 March 2026, the Authority held market loans of £2m (2024/25: £5m).

The Authority is exposed to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Authority, depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates would have the following effects:

- Borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise;
- Borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the borrowing will fall (no impact on revenue balances);
- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall (no impact on revenue balances).

Borrowings are not carried at fair value on the balance sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and affect the General Fund Balance.

The Authority has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. During periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate loans will be repaid early to limit exposure to losses.

32 CONTINGENT LIABILITY

Pension Claims

Following a lengthy legal process, the judgment in the case of O’Brien vs Ministry of Justice was issued during 2019. This found that the decision to limit the period from which a part-time employee could join the pension scheme was erroneous and eligible employees should be permitted to join the relevant scheme with effect from the start of their contracts.

This judgment has national implications for staff who are employed as retained firefighters whose contract of employment commenced before 6 April 2000 including those who have not yet previously received the full opportunity to purchase past service to which they were entitled.

The Welsh Ministers have made amendments to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2007 (Modified) to provide a mechanism for this matter to be addressed. The Firefighters’ Pension Schemes and Compensation Scheme (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2024, was made and laid in January and came into force on 1 February 2024. All eligible persons will be afforded the opportunity of buying back pension entitlements within the timescales specified within the order.

The full financial impact of the updated regulations cannot be fully calculated although an estimate has been included within the 2020 valuation of the Authority's pension scheme liabilities undertaken by the Government's Actuary Department (GAD).

Employment Tribunal

At the year-end there were no matters that required financial recognition.

33 CONTINGENT ASSET

At the year-end there were no matters that required recognition.

FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION FUND ACCOUNT

Firefighters Pension Fund Account for the year ended 31 March 2026

This statement presents the financial position of the Firefighters' Pension Fund Account, detailing whether the Authority has a payable or receivable balance with the Welsh Government to ensure the account is balanced. Additionally, it provides information on the net assets of the fund.

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Contributions Receivable:	
(4,906)	Employer normal contributions	(5,437)
0	Employer ill health charge	0
0	Employer backdated contributions	0
(2,067)	Members normal contributions	(2,309)
(100)	Members backdated contributions	(304)
(321)	Transfers In	(855)
(7,394)	**Total Contributions**	**(8,905)**
	Benefits Payable:	
9,737	Pension Payments	10,872
2,437	Commutation of Pensions and Lump Sum retirement benefits	3,332
0	Backdated Commutation Payments	0
	Payments to and on account of leavers:	
88	Transfers out	16
12,262	**Total Benefits**	**14,220**
4,868	Deficit for the year before grants receivables from the Welsh Government	5,315
(4,868)	Top Up grant payable to/(from) Welsh Government	(5,315)
0	**Net Amount (Payable)/Receivable for Year**	**0**

Net Assets Statement as at 31 March 2026

2024/25 £'000		2025/26 £'000
	Current assets	
(655)	Amount owed (from)/to the General Fund	(3,765)
(655)	**Total Current Assets**	**(3,765)**
	Current Liabilities	
655	Top Up grant payable to/(from) Welsh Government	3,765
655	**Total Current Liabilities**	**3,765**

Notes to the Firefighters' Pension Fund Account

The Fund, established on 1 April 2007 under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) Order 2007, encompasses the 1992, 2007, and 2015 Firefighters' Pension Schemes and is administered by the Authority. This is an unfunded scheme with no investment assets. Each year, the fund is balanced to zero through the receipt of a pension top-up grant from the Welsh Government in the event of a deficit, or by remitting any surplus back to the Welsh Government.

Employee and employer contributions are paid into the Fund, from which payments to pensioners are made. Employee's and employer's contribution levels are based on percentages of pensionable pay set nationally by the Welsh Government and subject to revaluation by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) on a four yearly basis or as otherwise directed by HM Treasury.

Transfers in to the scheme are a transfer of pension benefits from another pension scheme, for new or existing employees and transfers out are transfer of benefits for employees who have left the Authority and joined another pension scheme.

The Authority is responsible for paying the employer's contributions into the fund. These are the costs that are included in the accounts for the Authority.

At the beginning of the financial year an assessment is made as to the amount of Top Up grant required from the Welsh Government. The estimate includes an assessment of the number of firefighters due to retire within the year, based on age and years' service.

Contribution Rates

As per the Firefighters' Pension Regulations, the employer's contribution rate for the 2015 scheme will be 31.0% of pensionable pay, effective from 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2025 (up from 27.3% in 2023/24). The employee contribution rates vary according to pensionable pay bands, detailed below:

Pensionable Pay Band	Contribution Rate % (01 Apr - 31 Aug)
Up to £27,818	11.0
£27,819 to £51,515	12.9
£51,516 to £142,500	13.5
More than £142,501	14.5

New employee contribution rates came into effect from 1 September 2025, with rates determined by reference to grade rather than salary band. These rates were applied from the September salary payments onwards, were not applied retrospectively, and no member owes any arrears of contributions as a result of these changes.

Duty System	Grade / Role	Contribution Rate % (from 01 Sept)
Retained	All	13.0
Wholetime	Firefighter	13.0
Wholetime	Crew Manager	13.2
Wholetime	Watch Manager	13.2
Wholetime	Station Manager	13.7
Wholetime	Group Manager	13.7
Wholetime	Area Manager	14.2
Wholetime	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	14.5
Wholetime	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	14.5
Wholetime	Chief Fire Officer	14.5

The Firefighters' Pension Fund Account does not take account of liabilities for pensions and other benefits after the period end as this is the responsibility of the Authority. Details of the long term pension obligations can be found in Note 30 to the core financial statements.

Appendix 1

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Authority's transactions for the 2025/26 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2026. The Authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, which require the accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices, under section 21 of the Local Government Act 2003, primarily comprise of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025/26 supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments. The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

In relation to a policy regarding capitalisation of expenditure, our practice is to operate on the basis of the nature of expenditure rather than a prescribed level of expenditure.

2. ACCRUALS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

In the revenue accounts, income and expenditure are accounted for net of VAT (unless the VAT is irrecoverable) in the year they arise, not when cash payments are made or received. This aligns with IAS 1, which mandates the accrual basis of accounting to ensure comparability and a true and fair view of financial performance and position.

- **Expenses**: Recorded when services are received, not when payments are made. Income from customers is recognised when goods or services are provided.
- **Supplies**: Recorded as expenditure when consumed. If received but not yet used, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- **Interest**: Accounted for using the effective interest rate method, rather than the cash flows specified by the contract.
- **Debtors and Creditors**: If revenue and expenditure are recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor is recorded in the Balance Sheet. If debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down, and a charge is made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

3. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash includes cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions that can be withdrawn without penalty within 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature within three months of acquisition and can be easily converted to cash with minimal risk.

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and are part of the Authority's cash management.

4. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS, CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND ESTIMATES AND ERRORS

Prior period adjustments may occur due to changes in accounting policies or to correct material errors. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, affecting the current and future years, and do not result in prior period adjustments.

Changes in accounting policies are made only when required by proper accounting practices or when they provide more reliable or relevant information about the Authority's financial position or performance. These changes are applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for prior periods as if the new policy had always been applied. Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

5. CHARGES TO REVENUE FOR NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Services, support services, and trading accounts are charged an estimate of the cost of holding non-current assets during the year. This includes:

- **Depreciation**: Attributable to the assets used by the relevant service.
- **Revaluation and Impairment Losses**: On assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the revaluation reserve to offset the losses.
- **Amortisation**: Of intangible assets attributable to the service.

The Authority is not required to raise a levy to fund these costs. Instead, it makes an annual contribution from revenue towards reducing its overall borrowing requirement, calculated on a prudent basis. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses, and amortisation are replaced by this contribution in the General Fund balance (Minimum Revenue Provision) through an adjusting transaction with the capital adjustment account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

6. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Benefits payable during employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end and include wages, salaries, paid leave, bonuses, and non-monetary benefits (e.g., cars). These are recognised as expenses in the year employees provide services to the Authority.

An accrual is made for holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g., time off in lieu) earned but not taken before the year-end, which employees can carry forward to the next financial year. This accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year. The accrual is charged to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement to the accumulated absences account, ensuring holiday entitlements are charged to revenue in the year the leave is taken.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Authority are members of two separate pension schemes:

- **Firefighters' Pension Scheme**: Administered by Dyfed Pension Fund, Carmarthenshire County Council.
- **Local Government Pension Scheme**: Administered by Clwyd Pension Fund, Flintshire County Council.

Both schemes provide defined benefits (retirement lump sums and pensions) earned as employees work for the Authority.

Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS)

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme is an unfunded defined benefits scheme with no assets or investment income.

- **Liabilities**: Included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover, and projected earnings.
- **Discount Rate**: Liabilities are discounted to current prices using a rate based on Government bond yields plus an additional margin.

Service cost:

- **Current Service Cost:** Increase in liabilities from service earned in year, allocated in the CIES to the services for which employees worked.
- **Past Service Cost:** Increase in liabilities from scheme amendments or curtailments related to earlier years, debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the CIES.
- **Net Interest:** Expense that arises from the passage of time on the net defined benefit liability. It is calculated by applying the discount rate to the net defined benefit liability at the beginning of the period. This expense is charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Essentially, it represents the interest cost of having a pension liability over time.

Remeasurements:

- **Actuarial Gains and Losses:** Changes in net pension liability due to updated assumptions or events not matching previous actuary assumptions, charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

- **Contributions paid to the Fund:** Cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund Balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension funds or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Local Government Pension Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme:

- **Liabilities**: Included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover, and projected earnings for current employees.
- **Discount Rate**: Liabilities are discounted to current prices using a rate based on corporate bonds.
- **Assets**: The assets of the Clwyd Pension Fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:
    - Quoted securities: current bid price
    - Unquoted securities: professional estimate
    - Unitised securities: current bid price
    - Property: market value

The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

Service cost comprising:

- **Current Service Cost**: The increase in liabilities due to years of service earned this year, allocated to the services for which the employees worked in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- **Past Service Cost**: The increase in liabilities due to a scheme amendment or curtailment related to years of service earned in earlier years, debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of corporate costs.
- **Net Interest on the Net Defined Benefit Liability/(Asset)**: The change during the period in the net defined benefit liability/(asset) due to the passage of time, charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability/(asset) at the beginning of the period, considering any changes during the period due to contributions and benefit payments.

Remeasurements comprising:

- **Return on Plan Assets**: Excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure.

- **Actuarial Gains and Losses**: Changes in the net pensions liability due to events not coinciding with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or updates to the actuaries' assumptions, charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure.
- **Contributions Paid to the Clwyd Pension Fund**: Cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities, not accounted for as an expense.

Statutory Provisions

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. This means there are transfers to and from the pensions reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance on the pensions reserve measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of accounting for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 governs how the long-term liabilities which exist in relation to pension costs should be reported. FRAs in England and Wales are required to produce their financial statements in accordance with IAS19.

Discretionary Benefits:

The Authority has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise from such awards are accrued in the year of the decision and accounted for using the same policies as applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

7. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

Events after the Balance Sheet reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the Balance Sheet date and the date when the statement of accounts are authorised for issue. These events are classified into two types:

- **Events Providing Evidence of Conditions at the End of the Reporting Period -** If the event provides evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period, the statement of accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.

- **Events Indicative of Conditions Arising After the Reporting Period -** If the event indicates conditions that arose after the reporting period, the statement of accounts is not adjusted. However, if these events would have a material effect, their nature and estimated financial impact are disclosed in the notes.

8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

A Financial instrument is ‘any contract that creates a financial asset for one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument for another’.

Initial Measurement and Carrying Amount:

- **Financial Liabilities (Loans)**: Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. The annual interest paid is based on the carrying amount of the loan multiplied by the effective interest rate.
- **Financial Assets (Investments)**: Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. The annual interest received is based on the carrying amount of the investment multiplied by the effective interest rate.

For all loans and investments, the amounts presented in the Balance Sheet are the principal outstanding plus any accrued interest for the year.

Recognition and Measurement

- **Financial Liabilities**: Recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. Initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. Annual charges for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability multiplied by the effective interest rate. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

For most of the borrowings that the Authority has, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest); and interest charged to the CIES is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Financial assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow characteristics. The Authority holds financial assets measured at:

- Amortised Cost
- Fair Value Through Profit or Loss (FVPL)

The Authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows, so financial assets are classified as amortised cost.

Financial assets measured at amortised cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value.
These assets are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument.

For most financial assets held by the Authority, the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest), and the interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of a financial asset are credited or debited to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the CIES.

9. FOREIGN CURRENCY TRANSACTIONS

When the Authority enters into a transaction in a foreign currency, the transaction is converted into sterling at the exchange rate on the date the transaction occurs. If there are amounts in foreign currency outstanding at the year-end, they are reconverted at the spot exchange rate on 31 March. Any resulting gains or losses are recognised in the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

10. ACCOUNTING FOR GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Government grants and third-party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Authority when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the Authority will comply with the conditions attached to the payments, and
- the grants or contributions will be received.

Recognition: Amounts recognised as due are not credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement until the conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied.

Unsatisfied Conditions: Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as creditors.

Satisfied Conditions: When the conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (for attributable revenue grants and contributions) or to Taxation & Non-specific Grant Income (for non-ring fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

11. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Authority as a result of past events, such as software licences, is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Authority.

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Under the revised Code of Practice, effective from 1 April 2025, intangible assets can no longer be revalued. In accordance with the Code, all intangible assets must now be held at depreciated historic cost, as the revaluation model has been withdrawn. The Authority does not hold any intangible assets that met the criteria for revaluation under the previous code; therefore, there are no transitional impacts arising from this change for 2025/26.

The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that it might be impaired. Any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

When expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses, and disposal gains and losses are not allowed to impact the General Fund balance. These gains and losses are reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the capital adjustment account. For any sale proceeds greater than £10,000, the amounts are posted to the capital receipts reserve.

12. INVENTORIES

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using the First-In, First-Out (FIFO) costing formula

13. LEASES

The Authority applies IFRS 16 Leases and recognises most leases on the Balance Sheet in the form of right-of-use (ROU) assets and corresponding lease liabilities. This reflects the Authority's right to use leased assets and the obligation to make lease payments over the lease term.

Leases are assessed at inception to determine whether a contract conveys the right to use an identified asset in exchange for consideration. Where a contract contains both land and buildings, each component is assessed separately in accordance with the Code.

Lessee Accounting

ROU assets are recognised at the value of the lease liability, adjusted for any lease prepayments, initial direct costs or obligations to restore the site, and reduced by any lease incentives. Lease liabilities are measured at the present value of future lease payments, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, or the Authority's incremental borrowing rate where this cannot be readily determined.

Lease payments include fixed payments, in substance fixed payments, amounts under residual value guarantees, payments under options the Authority is reasonably certain to exercise, and any penalties for early termination. ROU assets are subsequently measured using the IFRS 16 cost model.

Low-cost lease exemption: The low-cost exemption is set at £10,000, in line with the de minimis expenditure level for Property, Plant & Equipment. Leases below this value will be excluded from IFRS16.

Short-term lease exemption: Leases with a lease term of 12 months or less at the commencement date, and which do not include a purchase option, are treated as short-term leases. Where this exemption is applied, such leases are excluded from IFRS 16 recognition, with lease payments charged to expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Intangible asset exemption: IFRS 16 does not apply to leases of intangible assets (e.g., software licences), which continue to be accounted for under the relevant intangible asset policies.

Use of portfolio of leases with reasonably similar characteristics: The Authority will apply the portfolio expedient for photocopiers and similar machines (e.g., MFDs, franking machines). These leases have similar characteristics in function, cost, and agreements, and will fall within the low-cost exemption.

Depreciation and Interest

ROU assets are depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life or the lease term. Lease payments are split between a finance charge recognised in the CIES, and a reduction of the lease liability.

Capital accounting requirements apply in the same way as for owned non-current assets. Statutory adjustments ensure that depreciation and interest charges do not affect the General Fund, replaced instead by statutory financing entries.

Other Arrangements Containing a Lease

Arrangements that do not legally constitute a lease may still fall within the scope of IFRS 16 if they grant control over the use of an identified asset. Such arrangements are reviewed and accounted for consistently with IFRS 16 principles.

Finance Leases (Lessee)

A lease is classified as a finance lease where it transfers substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership. In such cases, the asset and liability are recognised at the lower of fair value or the present value of minimum lease payments. Depreciation is charged over the lease term unless ownership transfers to the Authority. Finance lease accounting follows the same principles as the ROU model for depreciation, liability reduction and interest recognition.

Instead of raising a levy for depreciation or impairment losses, the Authority makes an annual revenue contribution towards the capital investment, in line with statutory requirements. This is reflected through an adjustment between the General Fund and the Capital Adjustment Account.

The Authority as Lessor

Finance Leases Assets disposed of under finance leases shall be written out of the Balance Sheet and an amount recognised in the Balance Sheet as a receivable debtor that reflects the net investment in the lease as defined by the appropriate accounting standard.

The capital element of any rental due under a finance lease shall be accounted for as a capital receipt, the debtor and the equivalent liability being written down by that amount. The finance element shall be treated as revenue income.

14. PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Assets that have physical substance and are used for producing or supplying goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes, and are expected to be used for more than one financial year, are classified as Property, Plant, and Equipment.

Recognition

Expenditure on acquiring, creating, or enhancing Property, Plant, and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis if it is probable that future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the Authority and the cost can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential (e.g., repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when incurred.

A de minimis expenditure level of £10,000 has been set for Property, Plant, and Equipment. Expenditure below this level will not be subject to capital accounting requirements. If an asset is revalued below £10,000, any associated expenditure and depreciation will be written out, and the asset will be removed from the Fixed Asset Register.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, which includes the purchase price, any costs necessary to bring the asset to its intended location and condition, and an initial estimate of dismantling and site restoration costs. The Authority does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred while assets are under construction. The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be their fair value.

Assets are carried on the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Land & Buildings: Offices/Workshops – current value (Existing Use Value)
- Land & Buildings: Fire Stations – current value (Depreciated Replacement Cost)
- Assets under construction - historical cost
- All other assets - current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (Existing Use Value).

If there is no market-based evidence of current value due to the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value. For non-property assets with short useful lives or low values, depreciated historical cost is used as a proxy for current value.

Indexation of Property, Plant & Equipment

The Authority applies indexation to relevant Property, Plant & Equipment to keep asset values accurate between formal valuations, in line with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice. Indexation updates values in years without a full revaluation so that the Balance Sheet continues to reflect current value, but it does not replace the requirement for full revaluations within the five-year cycle or the need to assess assets for possible impairment. The next full revaluation for the relevant asset classes is scheduled to take place in 2027/28.

Indexation is applied annually to assets measured at current value, including Offices and Workshops (valued at Existing Use Value), Fire Stations and training towers (valued using Depreciated Replacement Cost) and Land. The Authority uses recognised external indices aligned with RICS and public-sector valuation guidance, with adjustment factors reviewed alongside the Authority's valuer.

The index is applied to the Opening Net Book Value (NBV) at 1 April to produce an updated carrying amount before depreciation. Increases in value are credited to the Revaluation Reserve unless they reverse earlier losses charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). Decreases are charged against any available Revaluation Reserve balance for the asset, with any further reduction recognised in the CIES. This ensures consistent treatment with full revaluations and impairment adjustments.

Indexation is only applied where the resulting change is material. If indices display unusual volatility or do not appropriately reflect an asset category, a valuation review may be completed instead. Where indicators of impairment exist, a separate impairment review is undertaken regardless of indexation.

Depreciation is based on the indexed NBV. For componentised buildings, indexation is allocated proportionately across all components so that the total indexed value reflects the uplift in the asset's Opening NBV.

When applying indexation, the Authority may process the adjustment either through proportional restatement of the gross cost and accumulated depreciation, or through the elimination of accumulated depreciation with a corresponding adjustment to the gross carrying amount. Both approaches are permitted under the Code.

Under the proportional restatement approach, the Authority updates asset values by uplifting both the gross carrying amount and the accumulated depreciation proportionately so that the indexed movement is applied consistently across all components of the asset. This method retains the existing relationship between gross cost and accumulated depreciation, ensuring that the indexed Net Book Value is achieved without eliminating prior depreciation. It maintains continuity in the depreciation profile and is consistent with the principles for subsequent measurement.

Impairments

Assets are assessed at each year-end for indications of impairment. If indications exist and the differences are material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated. If this is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Impairment losses are accounted for by writing down the carrying amount of the asset against any revaluation gains in the revaluation reserve (up to the amount of the accumulated gains). If there is no balance in the revaluation reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

If an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for all Property, Plant, and Equipment assets by systematically allocating their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. The useful economic life of assets is as follows:

Land	Infinite (no depreciation)
Buildings	Useful life of the property (as estimated by the valuer)
Buildings (leased)	Term of lease
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	5 - 20 years
Intangible Assets	5 years

Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis, with acquisitions being depreciated in the year following purchase. A full year's depreciation is charged in the year of disposal. Buildings are depreciated using componentisation, where an estimate is made of the useful life of each component of the building, and a weighted average is used to calculate the annual charge.The percentages used are:

Buildings – fire stations	2.05% - 2.22%
Buildings – offices/workshops	1.98% - 2.15%

Depreciation is charged within the income and expenditure account. This amount is credited to the General Fund Balance and has a neutral impact on the contributions made by the constituent authorities. The Authority is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards reducing its overall borrowing requirement.

Depreciation, revaluation, and impairment losses and amortisation are replaced by the contribution from General Fund Balances (MRP) through an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with the difference between current value depreciation and historical cost depreciation being transferred each year from the revaluation reserve to the capital adjustment account.

Disposals

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than continued use, it is reclassified as an asset held for sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less costs to sell. Subsequent decreases to fair value less costs to sell are posted to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services. Depreciation is not charged on assets held for sale.

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount in the Balance Sheet is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the revaluation reserve are transferred to the capital adjustment account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts remains within the capital receipts reserve and can only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Authority’s underlying need to borrow. Receipts are appropriated to the reserve from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against the levy, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

15. PROVISIONS, CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

Provisions

Provisions are made when an event has occurred on or before the Balance Sheet date:

- that gives the Authority a present obligation
- that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and
- where a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

If it is unclear whether an event has occurred on or before the Balance Sheet date, it is considered a present obligation if, based on all available evidence, it is more likely than not that a present obligation exists at the Balance Sheet date. The present obligation can be legal or constructive.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Authority has an obligation. They are measured at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the Balance Sheet date, considering relevant risks and uncertainties. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year. If it becomes less probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

If some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g., through an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Authority settles the obligation.

Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises when an event has occurred that gives the Authority a possible obligation, which will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control. Contingent liabilities also arise in situations where a provision would otherwise be made, but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability. Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are disclosed in a note to the accounts.

Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises when an event has occurred that gives the Authority a possible asset, which will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control.

Contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but are disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential

16. RESERVES

The Authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. These reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund balance. When expenditure is financed from a reserve, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year, affecting the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then transferred back into the General Fund balance, ensuring there is no net charge against the levy for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are maintained to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement, and employee benefits. These reserves do not represent usable resources for the Authority and are explained in the relevant policies.

17. VAT

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from HMRC. VAT receivable is excluded from income

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GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

MEWN CYFYNGDER Y GELWAIST

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

Audit of Accounts Report – North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Audit year: 2025-26

Date issued: September 2026

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Contents

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Introduction

Catherine Mealing-Jones

Auditor General for Wales

As the newly appointed Auditor General for Wales, I am pleased to share my Audit of Accounts Report. The Report summarises the main findings from my audit of your 2025-26 annual report and accounts. My team have already discussed these findings with the Head of Finance and Procurement.

My team have substantially completed the audit work as set out in my Audit Plan dated June 2026. The remaining tasks involve continuous planning and review.

Since my Audit Plan, I have updated materiality to reflect the 2025-26 accounts. I have not identified any new audit risks. My response to previously identified risks is set out in **Appendix 1**.

I am required to provide an opinion on whether the accounts have been properly prepared, and give a true and fair view, in all material respects. My proposed audit opinion and basis for it is outlined on page 8.

It is the responsibility of those charged with governance, i.e. the Authority to address any matters raised in my report and provide me with a Letter of Representation.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the officers and staff of North Wales FRA for their cooperation throughout the audit process which has been invaluable in completing this audit effectively.

Your audit at a glance

We intend to issue an **unqualified opinion** on the accounts

See **Appendix 3**

There are no **other significant matters** to report

See **Audit findings**

There are **uncorrected misstatements** in the accounts which we wish to draw to your attention.

See **Audit findings**

We have raised **One recommendation** as a result of our work

See **Appendix 5**

Subject to no further material issues being identified. We are aiming to certify your accounts ahead of the deadline of **30 September 2026**.

Materiality

I use professional judgement to set a materiality threshold to identify and correct misstatements that could affect users' decisions, considering both financial errors and disclosure requirements according to the applicable accounting framework and laws. My team updates materiality throughout the audit and I include in this report matters that exceed my reporting threshold, as set out below:

Materiality

Set at 2% of gross expenditure based upon 2025-26 draft financial statements

North Wales FRA
£1,061,000

Fire Fighter Pension Fund
£284,000

Reporting threshold (trivial)

Set at 5% of materiality

North Wales FRA
£53,000

Fire Fighter Pension Fund
£14,000

There are some areas of the accounts that may be of more importance to the user of the accounts. We confirm lower materiality levels for these:

Senior Officer Remuneration Disclosures

£1,000

Related party disclosures

£10,000

Audit Findings

Misstatements

A misstatement arises where information in the accounts is not in accordance with accounting standards.

Uncorrected misstatements

We set out below the misstatements we identified in the accounts, which have been discussed with management but remain uncorrected. We request that these misstatements be corrected.

If you decide not to correct these misstatements, we ask that you provide us with the reasons in writing for not correcting them:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Corrected misstatements

During our audit, we identified misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

These are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Other significant issues

International Standard on Auditing 260 requires us to communicate with those charged with governance. We must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of North Wales FRA's financial reporting process.

There were no such issues identified during the audit.

Proposed audit opinion

Audit opinion

We intend to issue an unqualified audit opinion on this year's accounts once you have provided us with a Letter of Representation (see below).

Our proposed audit report is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Letter of representation

A Letter of Representation is a formal letter in which you confirm to us the accuracy and completeness of information provided to us during the audit. Some of this information is required by auditing standards; other information may relate specifically to your audit.

The letter we are requesting you to sign is included in **Appendix 4,** the contents of which are in line with our standard request for representations

Recommendations

We have made a recommendation during the audit, which is set out in **Appendix 5** along with management's response to the recommendation.

We will monitor progress against the recommendations during next year's audit.

Audit team and ethical compliance

The main members of my team who carried out the audit work, together with their contact details, are summarised in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1: My local audit team

Engagement Lead	Kate Havard Kate.Havard@audit.wales
Audit Manager	Carwyn Rees Carwyn.Rees@audit.wales
Audit Lead	Kieran Vickery Kieran.Vickery@audit.wales

Compliance with ethical standards

We confirm that:

- we have complied with the ethical standards we are required to follow in carrying out our work;
- we have remained independent of yourselves;
- our objectivity has not been compromised; and
- we have no relationships that could undermine our independence or objectivity.

Appendix 1 – Audit risks and outcomes

My Audit Plan set out the risks of material misstatement for the audit of North Wales FRA's accounts. **Exhibit 2** lists these audit risks and sets out how they were addressed as part of the audit. No additional audit risks have been identified since that need to be brought to your attention.

Exhibit 2: Audit risks reported previously, work done and outcome

Audit risk	Work done	Outcome
Risk of management override The risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is viewed as a significant risk [ISA 240.32-33].	The audit team: • tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments made in preparing the financial statements; • reviewed accounting estimates for bias. • Considered if there were any transactions outside of the normal course of business	Audit work did not identify any instances of management override of controls.

Valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus The pension fund liability estimates are based on assumptions and as a result there is a high level of uncertainty in the calculations. The calculation is also sensitive to economic conditions and the impact of legal cases.	The audit team: • Evaluated the actuary's instructions, competence, and the accuracy of the information provided. • Tested the accuracy of the pension fund net liability and disclosures in the financial statements. • Assessed the reasonableness of assumptions and the impact of any legal cases on the net liability.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of pension fund net liability/surplus.
Valuation of land and buildings The value of land and buildings in the balance sheet is subjective and can change significantly due to economic conditions and revaluation requirements.	The audit team: • assessed the work undertaken by the authority to determine that asset values are not materially misstated.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the valuation of land and buildings.
Senior officer remuneration Remuneration paid to senior officers continues to be of high interest and is material by nature. Therefore, there is a risk that even low-value errors in the disclosure could result in a material misstatement.	The audit team: • Understood the movements in the senior management team during 2025-26. • Verified that amounts paid are consistent with evidence and were in accordance with the approved pay policy.	Audit work did not identify any issues with the disclosure of senior officer remuneration.

Related party disclosures There is an increased risk of material misstatement because these disclosures are of significant public interest and are considered material by nature.	The audit team: • Reviewed the Authority's process for identifying related party relationships and associated transactions and balances. • Undertook procedures to confirm the completeness of related party relationships. • Ensured disclosures are complete, accurate, consistent with evidence, and in accordance with the Local Government Code.	Audit work did not identify any issues with Related Party disclosures.

Appendix 2 – Summary of corrections made

During our audit, we identified the following misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention.

Value of correction	Accounts area	Explanation
£2,192,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Disposals** Reclassification of movement in depreciation to show value of assets that have been disposed. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the historic depreciation of assets that have been disposed during the year.
£850,000	**Note 11 – Classification of Impairments** Reclassification of Impairments due to expenditure that does not impact the valuation due to presided valuation methods. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately disclose the movements on assets during the year
£177,000 - £2,133,000	**Note 30 – Defined Benefit Pension Scheme** Various reclassifications between lines within the note. There is no net impact on CIES or Balance Sheet.	To accurately reflect movements in pension balances in line with actuarial findings.

Appendix 3 – Proposed audit report

The report of the Auditor General for Wales to the members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of:

- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority;
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund

for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority financial statements comprise the Expenditure and Funding Analysis, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes, including the material accounting policies.

The Firefighters' Pension Fund Accounts comprise the Fund Account and Net Assets Statement and related notes including the material accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund as at 31 March 2026 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing in the UK (ISAs (UK)) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report.

My staff and I are independent of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the responsible financial officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and my auditor's report thereon. The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for the other information contained within the annual report or accompanying it. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to

determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of my audit:

- the information contained in the Narrative Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26;
- the information given in the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with guidance.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Narrative Report or the Annual Governance Statement.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters, which I report to you, if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.
- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my team;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

Responsibilities of the responsible financial officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts included in the Statement, the responsible financial officer is responsible for:

- the preparation of the statement of accounts, which give a true and fair view and comply with proper practices;
- maintaining proper accounting records;
- internal controls as the responsible financial officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of statements of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- assessing the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible financial officer anticipates that the services provided by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with section 13(2) of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Enquiring of management, internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's policies and procedures concerned with:

  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Considering as an audit team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals.
- Obtaining an understanding of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Firefighters' Pension Fund.
- Obtaining an understanding of related party relationships.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management and the Authority about actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all audit team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and Firefighters' Pension Fund's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Certificate of completion of audit

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the Firefighters' Pension Fund in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Auditor General for Wales' Code of Audit Practice.

Signature	1 Capital Quarter
Auditor General for Wales	Tyndall Street
Date	Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Appendix 4 – Letter of representation

[Audited body's letterhead]

Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

[date]

Representations regarding the 2025-26 financial statements

This letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for the year ended 31 March 2026, for the purpose of expressing an opinion on their truth and fairness and their proper preparation.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made enquiries as we consider sufficient, we can make the following representations to you.

Management representations

Responsibilities

We have fulfilled our responsibilities for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with legislative requirements and Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025-26; in particular the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance therewith;
- the design, implementation, maintenance and review of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

Information provided

We have provided you with:

- full access to:
  - all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as books of account and supporting documentation, minutes of meetings and other matters;

  - additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - unrestricted access to staff from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and involves:
  - management;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
  - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements;
- our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others;
- our knowledge of all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements; and
- the identity of all related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware;

Financial statement representations

All transactions, assets and liabilities have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

The methods, the data and the significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed.

All events occurring subsequent to the reporting date which require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted for or disclosed.

All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to the auditor and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions. The effects of uncorrected misstatements identified during the audit are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole. A summary of these items is set out below:

- £89,000 of impairment of assets was posted to the CIES rather than against the Revaluation Reserve. Correcting this would increase the surplus and reduce the Revaluation Reserve balance. Due to the nature of this transaction, this does not impact upon the General Fund.
- £85,000 of expenditure was incorrectly treated as a prepayment at year-end. Correcting this would reduce the balance of debtors and increase expenditure in 2025-26.

Representations by those charged with governance

We acknowledge that the representations made by management, above, have been discussed with us.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of true and fair financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The financial statements were approved by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on 21 September 2026.

We confirm that we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to you. We confirm that, as far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which you are unaware.

Signed by:	Signed by:
Officer who signs on behalf of management	Member who signs on behalf of those charged with governance
Date:	Date:

Appendix 5 – Recommendation

1. Inventory Management of Fleet Items

The Authority's Technology One software includes an inventory module, which is used for their main stores inventory. This allows automatic calculations of issue prices and valuation of items remaining in stock at the year-end, based on invoices received and issues processed. This is not used for fleet inventory currently, which is maintained by a spreadsheet.

In the testing of issues of fleet inventory, it was identified that some fleet items were being issued at a price which was not consistent with the Authority's accounting policy of 'first in, first out' (FIFO). Whilst this had a trivial impact upon the accounts for 2025-26, it is recommended that the process for inventory management for fleet items is incorporated into the Technology One system to ensure that issue prices and closing inventory values are accurately recorded.

Priority:

Medium

Accepted in full by management:

Yes

Management response:

The Service will review the suitability and efficiency of transitioning fleet inventory management into the TechnologyOne inventory module. The review will be completed by December 2026 to enable full integration by March 2027, where appropriate. If full integration is not considered the most effective solution, an alternative process will be implemented to ensure inventory issues and stock valuations are calculated consistently in line with the Authority's FIFO accounting policy.

Implementation date:

March 2027

Audit quality

Our commitment to audit quality in Audit Wales is absolute. We believe that audit quality is about getting things right first time.

We use a three lines of assurance model to demonstrate how we achieve this. We have established an Audit Quality Committee to co-ordinate and oversee those arrangements. We subject our work to independent scrutiny by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and our Chair of the Board acts as a link to our Board on audit quality. For more information see our latest audit quality report.

Our People

- Selection of right team
- Use of specialists
- Supervisions and review

Arrangements for achieving audit quality Selection of right team

- Audit platform
- Ethics
- Guidance
- Culture
- Learning and development
- Leadership
- Technical support

Independent assurance

- EQRs
- Themed reviews
- Cold reviews
- Root cause analysis
- Peer review
- Audit Quality Committee
- External monitoring

Supporting you

Audit Wales has a range of resources to support the scrutiny of Welsh public bodies, and to support them in continuing to improve the services they provide to the people of Wales.

Visit our website to find:

Our publications which cover our audit work at public bodies.

Information on our upcoming work and forward work programme for performance audit.

Data tools to help you better understand public spending trends.

Details of our Good Practice work and events including the sharing of emerging practice and insights from our audit work.

Our newsletter which provides you with regular updates on our public service audit work, good practice, and events.

Archwilio Cymru
Audit Wales

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.